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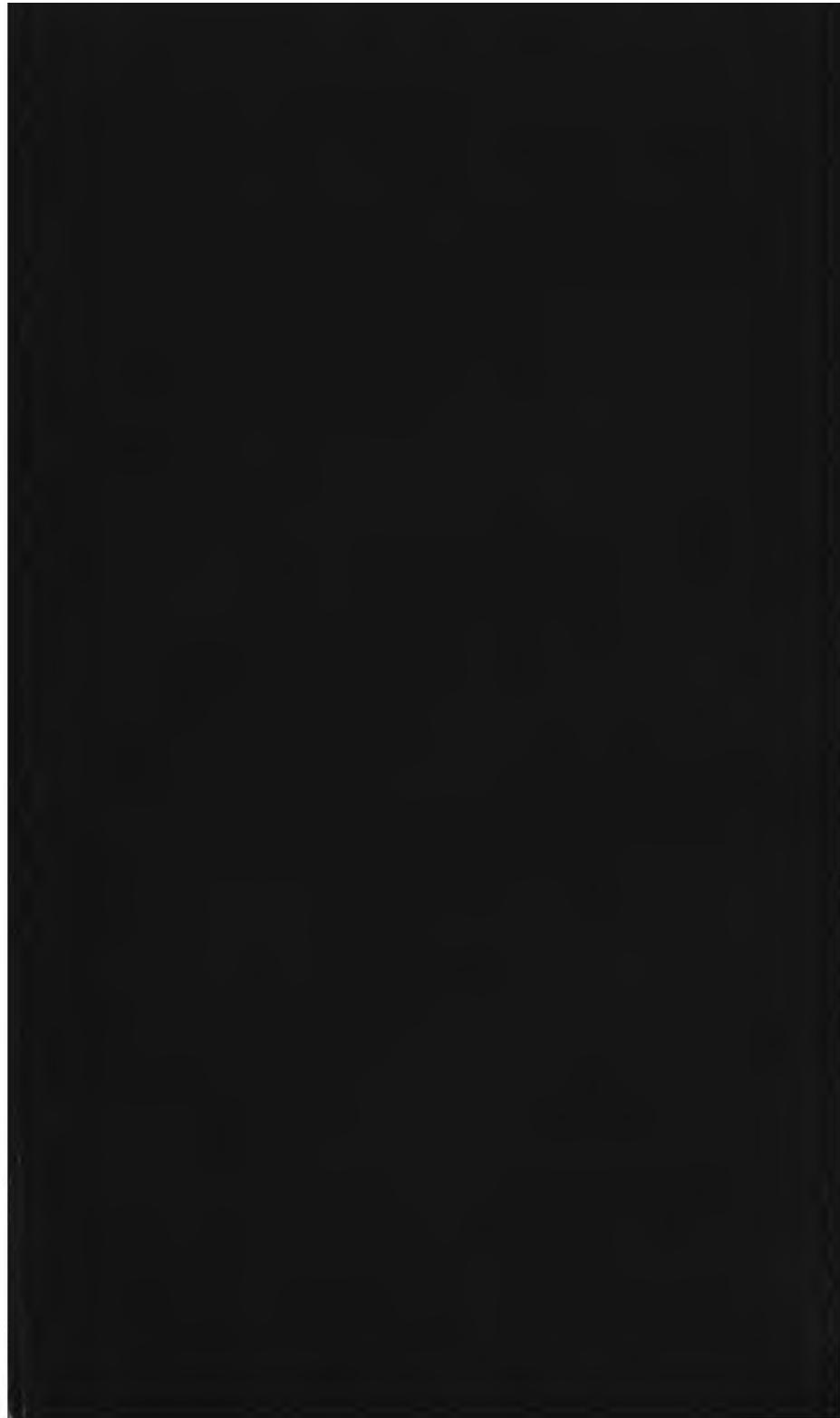


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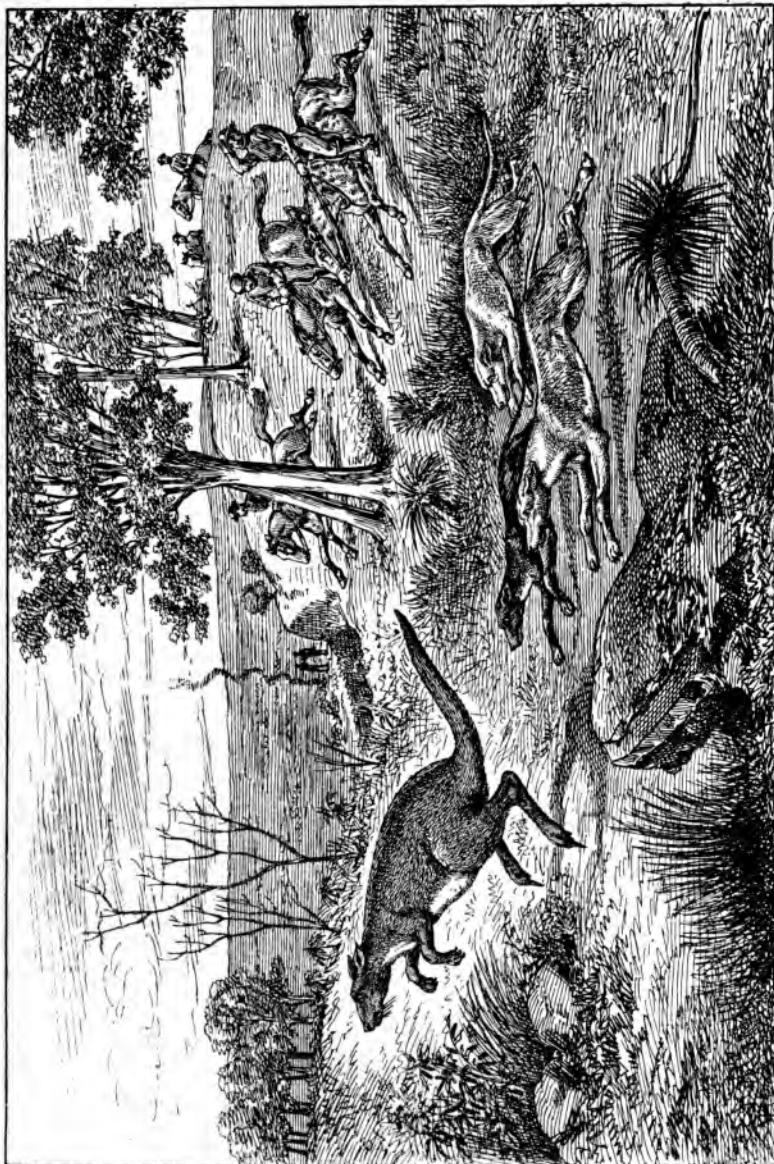
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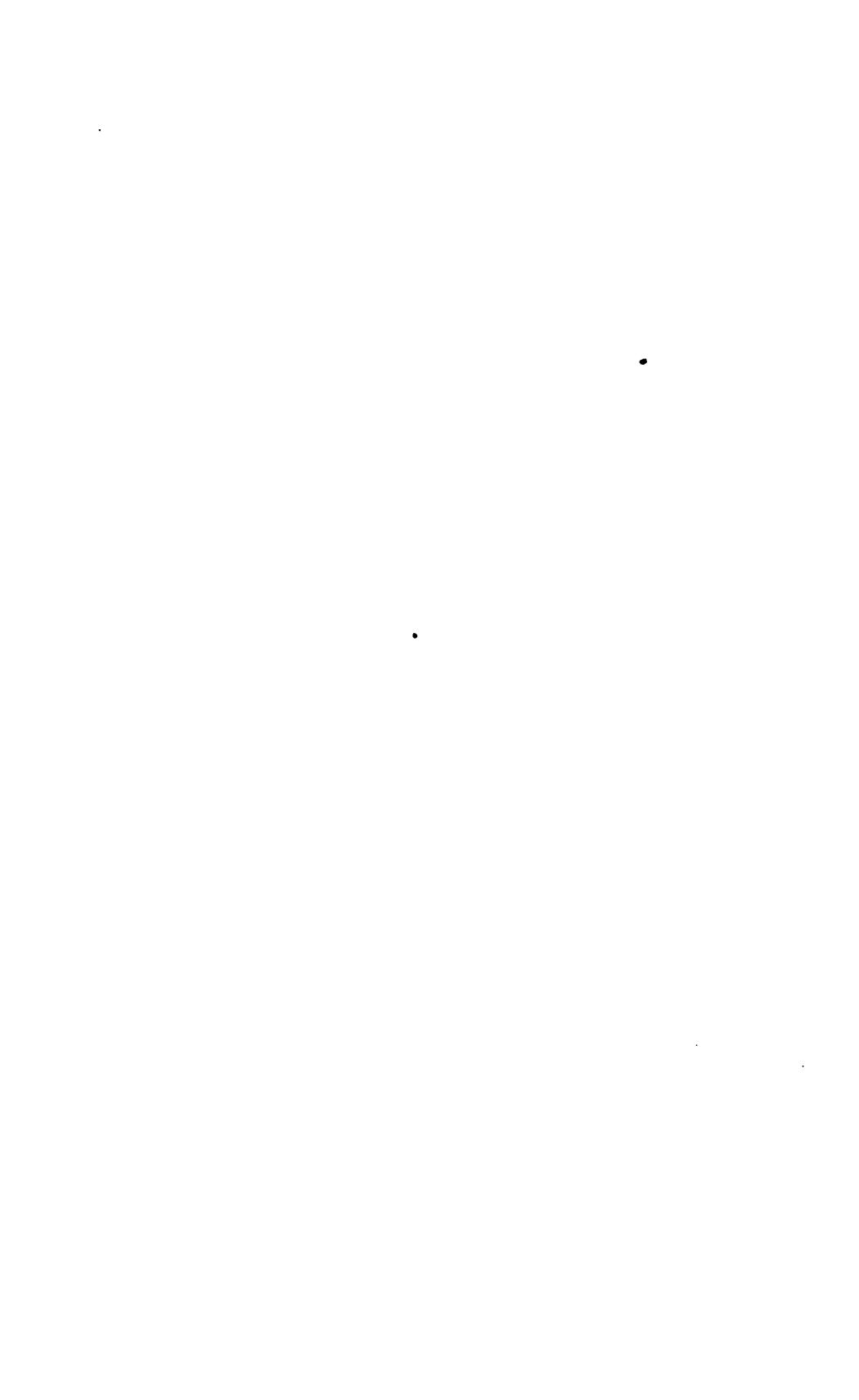


KANGAROO AND KAURI.

[Frontispiece.



A KANGAROO HUNT.



[*Frontispiece.*

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KANGAROO AND KAURI

SKETCHES AND ANECDOTES

OF

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

BY

J. K. ARTHUR
=

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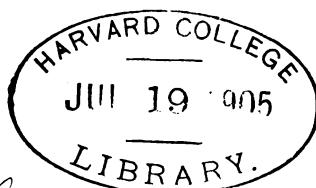
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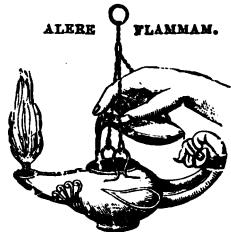
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TO THE
REV. JOHN WHITE, M.A. Cantab.,
RECTOR OF CHEVINGTON, NEAR BURY ST. EDMUND'S,
IN REMEMBRANCE OF HAPPY DAYS
SPENT IN HIS COMPANIONSHIP.

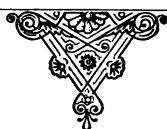
P R E F A C E.

I THINK it is the duty of everyone visiting Australia, New Zealand, or other British Colonies to give to the people of England such reliable information as he or she may obtain there, on subjects as to which so many persons in Great Britain may in truth be said to be profoundly ignorant.

This book is a condensed epitome of several years' experience and observation of Colonial life and activity. Much of what I have written may be already familiar to many who read it. But if the perusal of my book merely recalls to memory pleasing scenes and agreeable reminiscences, I shall not have published it in vain.

I hope all very learned people, and scientific

precisions of the stricter sort, will treat my book with condescension. It is not meant for them or such as they are, but for plain homely folk who prefer ordinary English talk to elaborate technical phraseology ; and more directly for those who may propose to try their fortune in Australia or New Zealand, or who may have friends or relatives already settled there. To such as these the hints or items of information contained in this book may prove useful or interesting, as they may be desirous of forming some idea of Colonial life and surroundings.



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PART I.
A U S T R A L I A.

KANGAROO AND KAURI.

AUSTRALIA.

CHAPTER I.

OUR ANTIPODEAN COLONIES.—AUSTRALASIAN PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY.—
STATE-AIDED IMMIGRATION.—RIGHT SORT OF IMMIGRANTS.—POETRY
OF EMIGRATION.—EMIGRANTS AND HOME TRADE.—CONVICT DEPÔTS
EXTINCT.—ABSENCE OF SERIOUS CRIME.—SPORT.—SEASONS.

OUR Colonies are invaluable possessions, and to the Government exercising the supreme control of them they often yield a tribute besides transacting an advantageous trade. Self-governing Colonies such as the Australasian group have, perhaps, greater facilities for promoting their own prosperity ; they decidedly seem to grow rich. State education of children there is gratuitous ; they are carried by the railway to school free of charge. The younger generation born and educated at the Antipodes will probably grow less and less attached to the mother country. Competition may adopt the first principle of helping oneself, and when this young, enterprising, and ambitious nation finds it can manufacture the imports we supply

to it, the raw material required for our own manufacturing industry may decrease in quantity.

In general the progress of the Australasian Colonies is very considerable, and their future prospects, it is to be hoped, will continue brilliant. With a climate by nature adapted to the European constitution, a fairly productive soil, and an industrious and persevering population, their growth should proceed with increasing rapidity. With their fine wool, abundant cereals, and various other commodities of commercial value, their productive powers are becoming more widely known and appreciated, and should offer a strong attraction to the more refined class of emigrants who bring with them somewhat more capital than European skilled labour. These people settling in such colonies develop their internal resources, and bring into the country a populous and flourishing community who reclaim vast tracts of cultivable land from the wilderness, while competing on equal terms with older countries, and exhibiting all the arts and refinements of Europe.

Certain Colonies formerly employed the receipts accruing from the sale of Crown lands in encouraging the introduction of immigrants. The plan, from its originator, was called the Wakefield system, and by it one third or one half of the proceeds was applied to immigration purposes. This system being now no longer in operation, the money goes into the general revenue of the Colonies. By State-aided immigration,

as one may easily understand, people were often sent, in part gratuitously, into a colony whether they were needed or not, or irrespective of their capabilities. The right sort to send are those willing and able to adapt themselves to circumstances, moving cautiously but not too slowly. The difficulty is in selecting and getting them there, as we must take time to investigate character in every case. The grievance has been that much rubbish has been shot from this country to that. Perhaps the best colonists are those who possess moderate capital, common sense, and perseverance, who take work when they can get it, not staying in towns while their money lasts—or till it is all gone.

The inclination of some people to explore and exploit a new country is very great, the “rushes” thither often being spasmodic on the receipt of good news. We overlook the fact that fortunes are to be made in every country, while the majority of mankind are too sluggish and obtuse to exert the necessary efforts in the right direction.

“ Eight hours’ work,
Eight hours’ play,
Eight hours’ sleep,
And eight bob a day ”

is the programme of the working man. This has to be very substantial work to bring him this pay. Lazy or incapable workmen will by no means receive this amount, though skilled labour is often paid higher.

Agricultural labourers are at the various seasons in great demand, especially at harvest-time. Artisans as a rule find little employment, the supply being in excess of the demand, and manufactories not being fully developed. Navvies generally meet with employment, but builders are pretty well supplied with workmen. Colonists themselves should be first consulted as to the classes of immigrants required.

Most people are strongly attached to the place of their birth. Therefore, when we see inhabitants of any countries eagerly engaging in projects of emigration, we may safely conclude that their conduct is not the result of choice, but of necessity. It is through the tendency of mankind to increase faster than food can be provided for them that the earth has been overspread with inhabitants.

The words of the English poet Campbell aptly express the aims and aspirations of many colonists :—

“ The pride to rear an independent shed,
And give the lips we love unborrow’d bread :
To see a world, from shadowy forests won,
In youthful beauty wedded to the sun ;
To skirt our home with harvests widely sown,
And call the blooming landscape all our own,
Our children’s heritage, in prospect long,
These are the hopes, high-minded hopes, and strong,
That beckon England’s wanderers o’er the brine,
To realms where foreign constellations shine,
Where streams from undiscovered fountains roll,
And winds shall fan them from th’ Antarctic pole.”

The poet's ideal portrait of the successful and satisfied colonist, enjoying in his later years the product of his early industry, enterprise, and thrift, may here be appropriately quoted :—

“ There, marking o'er his farm's expanding ring
 New fleeces whiten, and new fruits upspring,
 The grey-haired swain, his grandchild sporting round,
 Shall walk at eve his little empire's bound,
 Emblazed with ruby vintage, ripening corn,
 And verdant rampart of acacian thorn ;
 While, mingling with the scent his pipe exhales,
 The orange-grove's and fig-tree's breath prevails,
 Survey with pride beyond a monarch's spoil
 His honest arm's own subjugated soil,
 And summing all the blessings God has given,
 Put up his patriarchal prayer to Heaven,
 That when his bones shall here repose in peace,
 The scions of his love may still increase,
 And o'er a land where life has ample room,
 In health and plenty innocently bloom.”

In a subsequent passage of the same poem, Campbell thus prophetically apostrophizes the Australian Colony :—

“ Delightful land, in wildness ev'n benign,
 The glorious past is ours, the future thine !
 As in a cradled Hercules we trace
 The lines of empire in thine infant face.”

The fact can hardly be too strongly emphasized that every emigrant to the Colonies becomes a consumer of British goods to the extent of £8 to £10

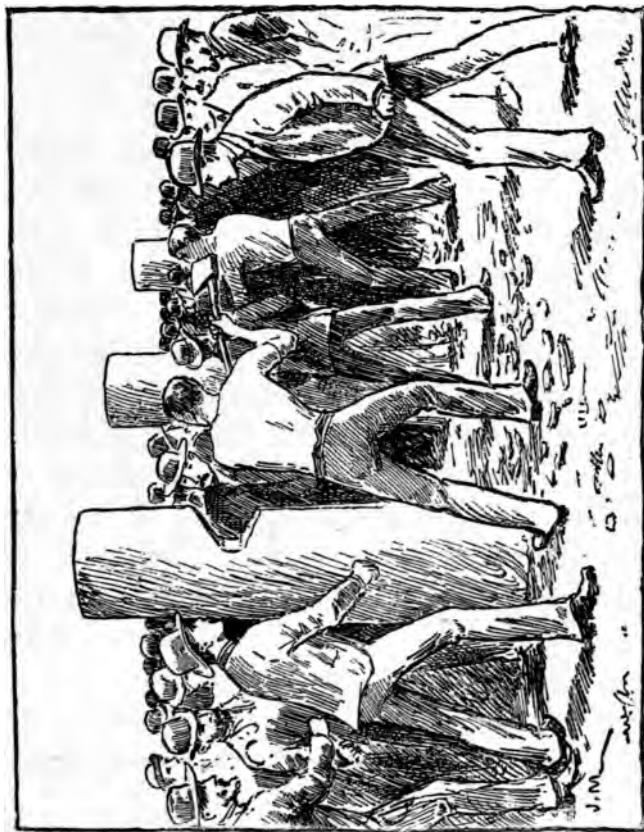
yearly, whereas a citizen of the United States consumes yearly only about 10 shillings' worth. It is probably on account of the trade that colonies have remained an object of affection to Englishmen. The advantages which they afford the mother country are innumerable. The fortunes which Colonial gentlemen bring home constitute an addition to the capital of this country.

Formerly the colony of New South Wales and other parts of Australia, as Fremantle and Perth in Western Australia, Hobart in Tasmania, were used as dépôts for receiving criminals from Great Britain. Every convict was put to that kind of work at which he was likely to prove most useful. Some of the best roads and bridges in Australia, and especially Tasmania, owe their origin to this sort of labour. A few ticket-of-leave men and some expirees are still to be met *, but the monstrous evil of convict importation has long ceased to exist. Lawlessness in the country is seldom met with, serious crime being hardly known; but small thefts, such as fruit-stealing by children and others, are as frequent as elsewhere.† Detached unguarded houses are particularly safe, the general resentment at being robbed setting everyone's

* Especially, I believe, in Western Australia, but since 1868 no convicts have been sent there.

† Since writing the foregoing, depredations and other offences have become more frequent, probably owing to the numbers of the unemployed, many of whom are useless for work.

[To face p. 6.



WOOD-CHOPPING CONTEST.



hand against an offender. Separately-located country stores (or shops, as we should say in England) are sometimes 20, 50, or even 100 yards away from a dwelling-house, but are seldom broken into. I have known only one instance of a store that stood about 50 yards from a dwelling-house being forcibly entered through the window, but the only thing missed was a suit of ready-made clothes.

Hardly any nation encourages sport so much as the Australians. They have figured well at cricket; as pedestrians at short distances (150 and 200 yards) they have made the fastest pace on record. They have some good "shots" amongst them, also some redoubtable pugilists and smart oarsmen. Amongst their recreations may be mentioned golf, tennis, football, bowls, yachting, and camping-out. For riding and driving the bushman is famous, and his marvellous feats seem to baffle all description. The liking for horses is general, as horse-racing all over the country may evince. Wood-chopping contests display the skill and smartness of Australians with the axe. Solid stems of trees are set up in the ground, each being the same thickness and height, say for instance, 3 feet thick and 9 feet high; these are to be cut in two with axes, and the man who does this quickest wins the prize. The engraving (from the 'Illustrated Australian News') shows the form of the "scarf," as made in felling trees, both in Australia and New Zealand, mentioned on page 99.

Queensland has been described as "the youngest and fairest of the Colonial daughters of Great Britain," on the occasion of its erection as a separate colony in 1859. The northern territory of South Australia has been called its "white elephant."

In Australia and adjacent islands it is summer when it is winter in Europe, and *vice versa*, the transitions of seasons being slight. During the season from December to March, the Australian summer, a good number of Australians go to Tasmania or even further south to New Zealand.

The greater part of the year is dry and almost rainless. Of course during the rainy season the back up-country roads, which are composed of only natural turf, get terribly cut up and sloppy after much traffic over them, but the larger portion of the country, being very dry, soon soaks up the rain.



CHAPTER II.

AUSTRALIAN CHARACTERISTICS.—POPULATION.—TRADE.—PRICES.—GOLD-
PRODUCTION.—“RUSHIES.”—RESOURCES ON STARTING AS A COLONIST.
—FISHING.—LEECH-GETTING.

COLONIALS usually are homely in their habits, take great interest in their landed property, and nearly everyone being possessed of some land their interest in it continues unabated. This may probably account for their independent manners and their fondness for horses, cattle, and a rural life. Few of the young women, especially in the country, have many advantages over their English-bred cousins, but a more sensible, intelligent, and unselfish class would probably be hard to find. Men wanting good useful wives might perhaps do well to hunt them up in Australia. When we find some of these “bush-girls,”—for so they may be called,—rivalling their English sisters, often as musical, as full of sparkling conversation, beauty, grace, and pleasing manners, perhaps you may not imagine that these nice girls can wash, bake, cook, churn, and attend to a dairy. True it has been said Australian girls have not red cheeks. Why should they? They have not that rough wind to fan them which fills the pores and

dilates the blood-vessels of the face. Are red cheeks an advantage after all? The Australian girl

“ has a beauty of her own,
A beauty of a paler tone,
Than English belles ;
Yet Southern sun and Southern air
Have kissed her cheeks, until they wear
The dainty tints that oft appear
On rosy shells.” *

The primitive habits and homes of the colonists in remote districts are sometimes remarkable, their cookery being often done outside on the nearest tree-stump. Education in these parts is usually very backward, as the class of nomadic children seldom attend one school for long. But stationary diggings—such as Ballarat, Castlemaine Beechworth, or Sandhurst—are much more satisfactory. In very early times the cost of carriage to the mines was as much as £100 per ton. Hay in Melbourne was dearer per pound than sugar. The cost, then, of food at the mines may be conjectured. Roads were in a frightful condition, and robbery was frequent.

The number of the male population is somewhat in excess of the female portion. The entire population of Australia and New Zealand estimated for 1892 somewhat exceeded 4,000,000, being slightly less than the whole population of London. Within

* ETHEL CASTILLA, Melbourne.

easy reach of Australia is the Chinese or "Celestial" population of 400,000,000.

Avoiding dry columns of statistics advertising the Colonies, I have given below a list of the most important items. This list corresponds closely with the returns for the year 1892, which I have written in round figures, in most instances considerably reduced, so as not to over-estimate them :—

The Imports total to about	£69,000,000
The Exports , " , ,	£63,000,000
Total extent of Railways, about ..	13,000 miles
Total Land under Cultivation	10,000,000 acres
Total Live Stock (Sheep)	102,000,000
Total number of Cattle	10,000,000
, , , Horses.....	2,000,000
, , , Pigs	1,500,000

PRICES OF COMMODITIES.

Horses, ordinary hacks	£ 8 to £15
, medium draught	£12 to £20
, superior draught	£15 to £30
Sheep	From 8s. to 12s. 6d.
Milch Cows	£6 to £10
(All live stock live in the open throughout the year.)	
Butcher's meat: Mutton	3d. per lb.
, , Beef.....	5d. " ,
Flour, best	11s. per 100 lbs.
Sugar	2½d. to 3½d. per lb.
Butter	6d. to 8d. per lb.
Tea	1s. 6d. to 3s. per lb.
Grapes	2d. to 4d. per lb.
Apples.....	1d. to 1½d. per lb.
Quinces and Pears, retail	About 4s. per bushel.

The increasing prosperity of the Colonies may be largely attributed to their vast mineral resources. In this respect Victoria maintains the leading position as a gold-producing colony. The value of the precious metal therein raised has been upwards of 210 millions. "Rushes," as newly-discovered gold-diggings are termed, often break out like volcanic eruptions, and too often end in "smoke."

A man possessing a little capital could secure a small grant of land in Australia in a fairly good hunting district, build himself a comfortable house, get a friend to share it with him, obtain a couple of good dogs, a gun, a spring cart, and a horse or two. As regards wearing apparel, moleskin trousers are much patronized by the colonists who have manual labour or much riding to do. They generally wear well, look neat, are light, cool, and cheap. The designs printed on them are often in various colours, and the material when new closely emulates the appearance of cloth. White cotton trousers are also a good deal worn. I do not think they wear quite as long as moleskin, but they are somewhat lighter, cooler, and cheaper. One objection is that they quickly get soiled. But as a rule dirt, as it is known in England, is almost unknown in Australia. Near your home you will probably have the kangaroo, called also the "Great Kangaroo," the Boomer, and the Forester—the Bundaary of the aborigines, a pet name for the buck being "Old Man"; the

opossum; the kangaroo-rat, which is about the size of a rabbit, measuring 15 inches from the nose to the root of the tail, the latter being $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length; bandicoots, a species of small rat,—“miserable as a bandicoot” is a much-used colonial phrase; wombat, or native pig, &c. Amongst your feathered game you will perhaps have pigeons, parrots, emus, wild turkey, ducks, swans, &c. The nearest water will probably supply you abundantly with fish. With a little care your garden will yield you vegetables and fruit. You can have a small piggery for raising pork, a few cows to supply milk and butter, a few head of cattle for beef, and some sheep for mutton. A few good books and some tobacco, if you are a smoker, will add to your pleasures. Some of the edible wild game is marketable, and the skins and furs of most of the animals are readily sold. Then the articles of commerce obtainable from the forest are manna, gum, palm cotton, and bark for tanning. So, if a man is fairly industrious and passably intelligent, he can usually maintain himself in moderate comfort, as there has been very little official or governmental interference with holdings of the kind here described. Nevertheless, to avoid bickering or squabbling, there is nothing like keeping as much as possible to oneself, going to the town only when it is positively necessary to dispose of stock or obtain supply. Thus, what with rabbit-trapping, kangaroo-hunting, wildfowl-shooting, fishing and leech-getting, one may

vary one's occupation according to the locality one lives in.

Fish are caught in very much the same fashion as we catch them in England, but the natives have several peculiar ways of catching them. Standing on or walking along a fallen or leaning tree that closely overhangs the water, they will try to spear the fish as they pass underneath. Sometimes they use a kind of small hoop-net, which, by their dexterity in diving, they pass under and take the fish.

The nets the aborigines formerly employed were made out of the split sinews of the kangaroo. The New Zealanders made theirs of the split leaves of the flag (New Zealand flax, concerning which see page 107) after it had been dried and beaten.

Leech-getting, I think, is the poorest of the casual occupations I have enumerated. It is practised in the following way:—White boards or white linen sheets are placed in the shallow lagoons. The white surface attracts the leeches to settle on it in great numbers. Having nothing better, old white mole-skin trousers have been tried with good success. The price paid for these leeches is only about five to six shillings a thousand, but they can easily be collected in leisure time. They are then put into glass bottles of a special form and so delivered to the chemist.



CHAPTER III.

SHEEP AND SHEEP-RUNS.—WOOL-SHEARING.—QUALITIES OF WOOL.—
INVENTION OF WOOL-FELTING.—CATTLE-MUSTERING.—FENCES.

AUSTRALIA is essentially a land of sheep and cattle. “Old crows” is a name given to old ewe sheep. Some of the sheep in the mountainous districts of Gippsland have enormous shaggy coats, in some cases intermixed with sticks and moss. I believe they are nicknamed “emus”; they appear almost valueless, and if one has a gun the general practice is to shoot them and so get rid of them. Sheep and many other animals have been noticed to feed with their faces to the wind, probably to catch the faintest sign of danger, so as to be able to take to flight. Sheep often indicate the approach of rain by the way they skip about, and before change or inclemency of weather it is usual for sheep to make for higher ground.

Railway trains are loaded with sheep continuously from end to end. To load the longest train only 20 minutes are required. The trucks are double-tiered.

Sheep are a safer stock than cattle; one can sell their lambs and shear one's ewes, or fatten them for the butcher.

The annual wool clip throughout Australia is reckoned at £20,000,000 sterling, and the entire capital invested in the industry at £300,000,000.

During the shearers' strike masters stood together, and were joined by wharfingers and shipowners. After a sharp struggle, they succeeded in bringing in sufficient free labour to defeat the shearers' union.

In shearing time the manager has to be very vigilant in seeing that the shearers' work is well done, that the clipping is uniform and without second cuts or "steps." The shearer's pay averages 15s. to £1 for every 100 sheep shorn. A good shearer will do his 100 to 120 a day (or more if the sheep are exceptionally small). The shorn fleece is first taken to the sorting table, where skirting is done, which consists in taking off the locks, bellies, topknots, and shank pieces, and removing any stained wool. After this the fleeces are rolled up and assorted, and then stowed in woolpacks, which are strong jute bags of about 10 lbs. in weight. The wool in each pack is first pressed into bales weighing about 400 lbs. In the wool sheds several hundredweights of twine are used daily for tying up the fleeces. This twine is called *fleece twine*; it is bought in hanks, and when cut at one end is ready for use, as it then draws out in equal threads of twine at a time as wanted.

The quality of wool depends much on climate and the way sheep are fed. Well-fed sheep usually produce good and sound wool; half-starved animals are

sure to produce a weak and “breachy” fibre which cannot bear the operation of the carding-comb, but is sure to snap. The “breach” in bad wool is an interval of dry, shrivelled material. Its real character can be decided only by the microscope, but practised wool-combers will detect wool so affected without having recourse to any instruments. The filaments of good wool ought to be uniformly round, brilliant, and properly serrated. The fibres also contract on coming in contact with water, and become so entangled with their jagged edges that they form a solid mass, which only requires to be properly shaped to be used for a variety of purposes. The contracting property of wool is the reason why flannel and other woollen materials shrink on first washing. This is the secret of felting, and the reason why cloth never unravels when cut, torn, or worn into holes.

The wool is prevented from felting while on the sheep’s back by the position of the fibres and by the natural grease with which it is furnished, so it is necessary to cleanse the wool before it will felt.

Anyone, on placing a fibre under a good microscope, will notice the resemblance to a number of thimbles with jagged edges inserted one into another. The man who is supposed to have hit on the idea of felting wool is said to have been a pilgrim, who, wishing to walk at a little more ease, stuffed some wool into his shoes. His walk, though it was wet, appears to have been comfortable, and when he came

to take the wool out of his shoes he found that from the continual kneadings it had undergone, with the repeated saturations, it had formed into a substance like cloth. This accidental invention was subsequently followed up and developed into a great manufacture.

The sheep stations, or “runs,” in New Zealand vary in extent, some carrying 15,000 to 200,000 sheep. The sheep-paths or trails in parts of the South Island are wonderfully steep and crooked or zigzagged. Sheep stations in Australia generally have more sheep than those in New Zealand, their extent of territory being much larger. The larger sheep-runs are usually hired from the Government, the occupiers frequently paying rent for them at so much a sheep thereon.

The process of cattle-mustering may be thus described :—As many riders as possible are employed, who collect the cattle from all portions of the run, and with great uproar of dogs barking, horses galloping, men shouting and (formerly) cracking their stockwhips *, each quota is made to enter the stock-yard. After the calves are castrated and branded the mob is freed. The process is repeated until all the outlying parts of the run are cleared and the whole of the occupants brought in. Adam Lindsay Gordon, the Australian poet, describes it in his characteristic style :—

* Stockwhips are now almost everywhere discarded.

" 'Twas merry 'mid the blackwoods, when we spied the station roofs,
To wheel the wild scrub cattle at the yard,
With a running fire of stockwhips, and a fiery run of hoofs ;
Oh ! the hardest day was never then too hard ! "

In a country like Australia, with vast open tracts of pastoral or cultivated land, the subject of fences is necessarily of great importance. The chief objection to hedgerows as fences is that they serve as a harbour for mischievous vermin, and their constant trimming would prove costly to the colonist where labour is so dear. But there can be hardly any doubt about their merit as being very picturesque, and relieving the monotony of the scenery.

Of the various kinds of fences used in Australia I may here mention the dog-leg, which is made with straight pieces of wood fixed in the ground in the form of the letter **X**; a similar piece crosses over the top of the upper crotch or **V**, then under the crotch or **A** of the next **X**, and so on till the fence is finished, which does not take very long if there are plenty of straight, medium-length pieces of wood, of a few inches thickness, available.

The chock-and-log fence is usually made by placing two young straight saplings of 18 or 20 feet lengths on short blocks or pillows of wood, tier above tier. Slight notches are cut in the blocks or pillows to prevent the poles that are laid across them at each end from slipping. The strength of this fence is very great if properly constructed, though it cannot

be made very high owing to the weight of the material.

Brush fences are handily made where plenty of trees or shrubs have been cut down, as these fences are composed chiefly of the boughs and limbs set upright. These fences somewhat resemble an English hedge, except that they are more massive and are dried and sear.

Post-and-rail fences are made with rails or split pieces of wood, which should be 3 inches in thickness, 9 inches broad, and 9 feet long. Each end of the rail is let into upright posts set in the ground 9 feet apart. To make the requisite holes in the post a mortising axe is sometimes used; it requires great skill in its handling, but the most ordinary way is to drill out the holes. Slip rails are barred passages in fences, leading from one enclosure to another, the rails of which are easily removed and replaced.

Wire fences are by far the most common and cheapest in use. The wire generally passes through small holes bored in the centre of the upright posts fixed in the ground at 12 feet apart. Sometimes the wires pass along one side of the posts through iron staples, which in shape resemble the letter **U**, an inch wide and an inch and a half long, with sharp pointed extremities; these are driven into the sides of the posts at set intervals apart. In all fences the lower parts are closer together than the top; this is to prevent animals creeping through them. The

wires being threaded through the "staples," at good distances apart are placed straining-posts, which are generally larger and more firmly set in the ground than ordinary fence-posts. On these straining-posts are fitted a sort of iron cog-and-ratchet wheels, which are attached to each wire, and by winding up these "rollers" each separate wire is drawn tight.

The bulk of some gate-posts, especially those of stockyards, is enormous; they often weigh quite a ton. Their strength is obvious, as even when loaded bullock-drays drive against them they are not displaced. The posts and rails of stockyards are purposely made very strong, so that when infuriated animals charge against them, or "rush" them, as the phrase is, they may not break down.

Where the distance between one station and another is very great, telephonic communication by means of the top wire of fences has been tried with success, the wire being carried over roads and gateways on elevated poles. The cost of the wire has been estimated at from 20 shillings a mile extra. The manager of the station carries an instrument with him, and by connecting it with the wire at any point he is able to communicate with any homestead.

Boundaries are usually indicated by wire fences and are "visited" and inspected at certain times by a man known as the "boundary rider," whose chief duty is to see that they remain in good condition and intact. Sometimes the boundary-line is merely a

clearing cut through woodland, and in some instances might well remind one of glades in English cover-shootings. Otherwise, where the ground is open, posts mark the boundary at certain intervals. As far as possible, boundaries are fixed by more natural means ; thus the river Murray, to the North, divides the greater part of Victoria, to the South, from New South Wales.

The preceding remarks on Australian fences also apply generally to those of New Zealand.



CHAPTER IV.

AUSTRALIAN TREES.—BARK-RINGING.—WATTLE-TREE BARK.—MALLEE SCRUB.—WHITE ANTS.—FRUIT.—PLANTS AND FLOWERS.

AUSTRALIAN eucalypti or gum-trees are evergreens; they shed their bark in autumn, but not their leaves, thus exposing their disrobed bodies to winter winds. So similar in appearance are they one to another that the new-comer will need many years of colonial experience before he is able to discern the difference between a gum and a box, a myall and a borth (a rose-tree).

The sandal-wood found in the interior parts of Western Australia is exported to China, where it is said they use it for incense and make it into work-boxes and other ornaments. The high price it once attained induced many of the colonists to go "sandal-wooding," travelling with their teams in search of this odorous wood. This wood is now apparently very scarce. It might probably be cultivated with advantage, though it is of very slow growth.

The stem of the myall-tree grows only to about 8 or 9 inches in thickness, and its wood is extremely hard. Myall-wood is now often used by the aborigines.

gines for tipping their spears, flint arrow-heads belonging to a comparatively early period, almost coeval with the broken gin-bottle spear-head epoch of Australia. Some of this wood finds its way to England, being rather serviceable in making tobacco-pipes.

The operation of "ringing" trees consists in peeling the bark off round their circumference at about 3 feet from the ground. The quantity of bark peeled off varies up to about a foot in breadth. As a general rule, trees are "rung" almost as easily as an orange is peeled. Sometimes trees are just slightly chipped all round; this prevents any sap from circulating. Of course it does not pay to "ring" trees with a great quantity of sap-wood, as one would have to cut deep all the way round them; but in Australia the trees usually have very little sap-wood, being mostly all "heart," as the harder wood is called. "Rung" trees soon turn sickly and wither away. To pass under them after a short lapse of time becomes rather dangerous, as frequently sear boughs and even trees themselves fall down without the least warning. The reason such a quantity of wood-land throughout Australia is "rung" is that the grass is not so much shaded, the impoverishment of the soil is less, and vegetation grows more freely and is sweeter. A station of 100,000 acres may have for two or three months in the year 15 to 20 bark-ringlers at work, who average conjointly over an acre a day per man.

For tanning purposes the bark of the wattle-tree, a species of acacia, is almost equal to that of the oak. It generally grows on rather poor soil, and sometimes to such an extent that there is a difficulty in preventing it from spreading and taking entire possession of the ground. Some quantity of the bark is exported besides what is used in the home leather manufacture.

The mallee scrub of Australia overgrows the ground in some places very densely. The Victorian Government have considered it desirable to construct a railway through it towards the fruit-growing irrigation settlement of Mildura, on the river Murray. The soil of the mallee country has been found very suitable for wheat, and the new railway is projected with the idea of opening up a new wheat-growing district.

The telegraph posts in many parts of Australia were at times destroyed by white ants, which are gradually destructive to all kinds of dry timber except the cypress-pine. Some parts of the line between Adelaide and Port Darwin, a distance of nearly 2000 miles, had to be re-poled with Oppenheimer's iron poles, at great expense. These ants have been known even to attack sugar-cane plantations. I believe they attack dry imported woods sooner than those native-grown, but I am not aware that they destroy growing trees.

Fruit export is as yet in its infancy, the conditions

on which these distant lands compete in the supply being quite the reverse of those of the trader nearer the market, who pays low wages, cheap freight, and probably has no connection with the middleman. The annual consumption of fruit in the United Kingdom is reckoned at about eight millions sterling, of which quantity a very small amount is supplied by our Australian relations.

Half the jam in the world is said to be made in Tasmania. This is sent principally to the colder parts of Australia and New Zealand.

There are enormous numbers of fruit gardens within easy distance of Melbourne, and I have read that obstructionists both in Melbourne and Sydney destroy tons of the fruit in order to keep up the price. Between the rows of trees in the orchards greens are frequently grown; of these I have been informed that the cabbages especially require irrigation.

Among Australian flowering plants, "Love" is the pet name bestowed on a most beautiful little creeper bearing flowers of a lovely blue. Leaves it has scarcely any, and those very small. The slender and tough stems twist and twine themselves into all sorts of knots, besides true lovers' knots, to form which is of course their bounden duty. The flower-sprays are from one inch to four inches long, with blossoms and buds closely placed along them. Save in hue, the flower is similar to the wild English polygala. When

nipped off the spray it has some likeness to a bird on the wing, the little footstalk representing the beak. I think this description applies more especially to the "Love" plant of Tasmania, that adjacent island which has been called the "garden of Australasia." This flower is described and figured in 'Some of my Bush Friends in Tasmania,' by Louisa Anne Meredith.

The Tasmanian sun-dew is as opposite in style to the close compact shape of its English relative as possible; but the pretty white blossom is nearly the same, whilst the family jewels are an inheritance not to be mistaken, albeit "worn with a difference." The ruby-gemmed leaves are singularly beautiful; but I have not observed whether the hairs on them entrap insects, as most of the species are believed to do. If the Tasmanian sun-dew possesses the qualities attributed to the English sun-dew, of removing sun-burn and freckles like the dawn-dew of May-day morning, the plants ought to become popular among fair colonists, in these times of imaginary bonnets and infinitesimal hats. The botanical name "*Drosera*" is formed from the Greek word for dew, in allusion to the pellucid dew-like glands on the surface of the leaves, whence also our English name "sun-dew."

The native Australian cherry-tree (*Exocarpus cupressiformis*, natural order Santalaceæ) is celebrated for its anomalous character of wearing the stone outside the fruit. The star-like blossom is so small that unobservant people add another anomaly to the

character of the tree, by affirming that it does not bear any flower.

Ferdinand Bauer accompanied Captain Flinders's expedition to Australia as botanical artist, and visited Tasmania in 1804. His paintings of Australian plants, now in the British Museum, are unrivalled for grace, colouring, and fidelity.

Large quantities of natural wild flowers have been and are still being totally exterminated throughout the Australian group, owing to the wilful destruction of forest by fire and axe to extend pastoral holdings. When Captain Cook discovered Australia in 1770, he called a spacious bay on the south-east coast Botany Bay, apparently for no other reason than from the profusion of hitherto unknown plants growing on its shores. African types of flora flourish on the western side, Polynesian types on the eastern, Indian types on the northern.

The nardoo (*Marsilia quadrifolia—salvatrix ?*) belongs to that class of flowerless plants which have distinguishable stems and leaves, in contradistinction to that in which stems and leaves are undistinguishable—as sea-weed, fungi, and lichens. The part used for food is the involucrum, sporangium, or spore-case, with its contained spores, which is of an oval shape, flattened and about an eighth of an inch in its longest diameter, hard and horny in texture, requiring considerable force to crush or pound it when dry, but becoming soft and mucilaginous when exposed to moisture.

It is the same substance that sustained Macpherson and Lyons when they were lost in 1860 between Menindie and Cooper's Creek, a pint of it serving them a day. They pounded it in the manner of the natives, between two stones, and made it into cakes like flour. The spores vegetate in water and root in the soil at the bottom, where the plants grow to maturity. After the water dries up, the plants die and leave the spore-cases on, in many instances quite covering, the dried mud ; and it is then that they are gathered for food. On the return of moisture either from rain or the overflowing of rivers, the spore-cases are softened, become mucilaginous, and discharge their contents to produce a fresh crop of plants. The foliage is green and resembles clover, being composed of three leaflets on the top of a stalk a few inches in length. This order contains five genera and twenty-four species, all of which are inhabitants of ditches or inundated places. They do not appear to be affected by climate so much as by situation, and have been detected in all the four quarters of the globe, chiefly, however, in temperate latitudes. Their uses are unknown to European botanists. If the nardoo grains are carefully opened without crushing them, the spores can be readily perceived, of a regular oval form, with the aid of a magnifying glass of small power.

The bur is a plant somewhat similar to the common English burdock (*Arctium Lappa*), the seed-balls of

which English boys sometimes sportfully throw at bats, which, if they strike against them, by their tenacity they bring to the ground. It becomes very troublesome on some vast uncleared lands in Australia, principally by its adhering to the sheep's wool. Men who are frequently employed on horseback to partly destroy this pest use a tool somewhat similar to a miniature spade attached to a long staff.

The common dock is said to have been disseminated in New Zealand through the rascality of an Englishman who sold the seeds for those of the tobacco plant.



CHAPTER V.

DROUGHTS.—IRRIGATION.—THE RIVER MURRAY.—MILDURA, RENMARK.
—SOFT TIMBER.—BUSH AND BUSH-FIRES.—LACK OF FIREWOOD.
—AGRICULTURE AND SQUATTING.

DROUGHTS or dry seasons constitute one of the most realistic drawbacks in Australia. The depreciation of real estate is largely owing to drought. It affects the lambing and the growth of the fleece upon the sheep's back. Large numbers of cattle and sheep were formerly boiled down during these dry seasons for their fat, but the freezing process introduced by Mr. Mort has, I think, put a stop partly, if not entirely, to this practice. Australia being a dry country with little or no surface-water, wells have been sunk, and in several cases plenty of water has been obtained. In other places water has not been struck till the sea-level has been reached; then it proved brackish. Sheep will scrape the ground with their feet to get at the roots of grass, which they eat greedily; they even devour piecemeal small sticks as thick as one's finger, and dried leaves. Men are employed to cut down shrubs and small trees for the sake of feeding the stock with the leaves. Roadmen, especially hawkers and bullockers, have to do the same. The

sombre she-oak (*Casuarina*), with long, waving, melancholy tresses and carved brown cones, is most sought after, as there are more moisture and nourishment in its leaves than in others. The horses are given flour mixed with bark, also potato parings and most of 'the pigs' wash. In and around the natural or artificial excavations or "water-holes," which collect water during the rainy seasons, but in time of drought are quickly dried up, the ground is often strewed with dead and dying cattle. Many of these, going down to the water, die from insufficiency of strength to return. Horses and cattle, after long continuance of drought, being hard pressed for food, will rush at you to eat your straw hat should you by chance happen to have one on. Cattle even eat the dead animals' bones. Before they eat them they have generally been well picked by the vultures, and then thoroughly cleaned by the ants.

During times of drought, in some parts of Australia 1s. per bucketful of water is the rate charged. Some districts are rainless for eighteen months at a time.

The river Murray, fed to a large extent by the snows which fall on the lofty peaks of the Muniong Range, is not entirely dependent on rainfall. The area drained by this river is not less than 300,000 square miles. Branches or tributary streams of the Murray, some of which run a considerable distance inland, returning to the main stream again several

miles further down, are called "billabongs," but are, I think, more generally known as lagoons or creeks. One of these is of such width and depth that it has acquired the name of the "Little Murray." It encloses an island 20 miles in length, which is called Pental Island, and has been made an agricultural reserve for experimental cultivation. Whether this experiment is being successfully developed the information hitherto available is not sufficiently definite or complete to determine.

When the Murray and other Australian rivers are in flood, the low-lying land near them is sometimes under water in all directions, almost as far as the eye can reach. Some of the bends in the Murray are so sharp that but for a few narrow promontories the landscape would present one widespreading sheet of water.

The first white man who saw the river Murray is said to have been enraptured with the region watered by it, as being remarkably well adapted for the settlement of a vast population employed in cultivating the immense alluvial tracts that extend along the river on each side.

The great importance of irrigation consists in its being the most effectual means of overcoming Australia's chief obstacle to agricultural prosperity,—the irregularity and insufficiency of rainfall. For irrigation purposes the river Murray may become of enormous utility and value. It has been calculated

that the mean flow of water per 24 hours during April is 590,000,000 gallons, and in September 7,250,000,000 gallons. The waters of the Murray, being very turbid, probably contain in a state of suspension much valuable fertilizing matter. A large proportion of the soil along the river being a rich sandy loam, artificial additions as fertilizers are rendered unnecessary.

The irrigation settlements of Mildura and Renmark—the first situate in Victoria, the second in South Australia,—may here be appropriately mentioned. Each of these settlements comprises a block of 250,000 acres, the land having a gradual fall or incline, in the case of Mildura in two directions—namely, one to the north-west, along the course of the Murray, and another to the westward from the river's bank. The Murray at Mildura is over 300 feet wide and more than 30 feet in depth. The Renmark colony slopes towards the water, so that facilities for irrigation are available from the upper end or margin. Irrigation farming, if conducted on judicious principles, is no doubt an extremely good investment. So far, however, as concerns ordinary fruit-growing, there seems to be an excess of supply over demand, owing to extreme abundance and cheapness.

It would be well if Australians would devote their attention to the planting of soft timber, such as useful conifers, these woods, now largely imported by them, being easily worked and often more useful than

most of the indigenous hardwoods. In the case of the steamship 'Austral,' which sank several years ago in Sydney harbour during the operation of coaling, owing to carelessness in leaving her ports open and to the vessel listing, when she suddenly filled with water and went down, it was found necessary to import kauri timber from New Zealand, wherewith they made a coffer-dam round her, and by this means eventually raised her.

The opinion that there is no stimulus of variety in the Australian bush may be echoed from the Australian poet Brunton Stephens :—

"They who tell us that the Bush is dull are not so far astray,
For this eucalyptic cloisterdom is anything but gay."

The Australian "bush," or wooded land, is comparatively open as contrasted with that of New Zealand, but loss of life in Australia through being "bushed" has been frequent, owing to the vast extent of the country and its sparse population. The following touching story of three children lost in the bush is told by the Melbourne correspondent of the 'Times' :—"Some weeks back, at the station of Mr. Dugald Smith, at Horsham, two boys, aged nine and five, and a girl, aged seven, the children of a carpenter named Duff, wandered into the bush and were lost. They had been sent out by their mother, as they had often gone out on the same errand before, to gather broom, and, not returning before dark, the

parents became alarmed, and a search commenced. The father, assisted by friends and neighbours in large numbers, scoured the country in every direction for nights and days in vain. At length, in despair, the assistance of some aboriginal blacks was obtained, these people possessing an almost bloodhound instinct in following the very slightest tracks. The blacks soon came upon the traces of the little wanderers, expatiating, as these trackers always do, at every bent-twig or flattened tuft of grass, on the apparent actings of the object of their search. ‘Here little one tired ; sit down. Big one kneel down, carry him along. Here travel all night ; dark ; not see that bush ; her fall on him.’ Further on, and more observations. ‘Here little one tired again ; big one kneel down ; no able to rise, fall flat on his face.’ The accuracy of these readings of the blacks was afterwards curiously corroborated by the children themselves. On the ninth day after they were lost, and long after the extinction of the faintest hope of their ever again being seen alive, the searching party came on them. They are described as having been found lying all of a row on a clump of broom among some trees, the youngest in the middle, carefully wrapped in his sister’s frock. They appeared to be in a deep and not unpleasant sleep. On being awakened, the eldest tried to sit up, but fell back. His face was so emaciated that his lips would not cover his teeth, and he could only just feebly groan ‘Father !’ The

youngest, who had suffered least, woke up as from a dream, childlike demanding, ‘Father, why didn’t you come for us sooner? We were cooeying for you.’ The sister, who was almost exhausted, when lifted up could only murmur ‘Cold, cold.’ No wonder, as the little creature had stripped herself of her frock, as the elder boy said, ‘to cover Frank, for he was crying with cold.’ The children have done well, and are rapidly recovering. They were without food, and, by their own account, drank water only once during the whole time they were out, and this was from the Friday of one week until the Saturday of the next week; in all, nine days and eight nights.”

Bush-fires are of frequent occurrence in the summer-time, and often do an immense amount of damage. The month of February, 1851, was notable for the great bush-fires that occurred. Hundreds of miles of bush-land were on fire; the population fled for their lives. Ashes from the forests of Mount Macedon, 46 miles away, fell into the streets of Melbourne. The most disastrous of these days was given the name of “Black Thursday.” Smokers, during the drier part of the summer, have to be very careful, in lighting and shaking out their pipes, to see that no sparks or smouldering tobacco drop about, as a little tinder may probably spread to a conflagration which the unlucky smoker’s utmost exertions will not be able to extinguish. If one sees a small quantity of grass on fire, about the best way to keep it from spreading

is to get some evergreen bough or shrub, and by moving quickly about and whipping your shrub of bush down you smother it out.

The lack of firewood, more especially in remote parts of Australia, causes much inconvenience. In some cases it has had to be carted over 80 miles on bullock-drays. I have known people who, when travelling with stock, would chip small quantities off the wooden posts of the fences, and were not above taking a spare railway sleeper or two, when they came alongside a railway, to light their fire. But iron standards, both in New Zealand and Australia, are coming much more into use. Three tons of the best hardwood are reckoned equal to, or as serviceable as, one ton of coal. As a general rule the destruction of forest is enormous. Occasionally, for some reason, large or intermediate trees are left standing by the contractor, splitter, or saw-mill owner. I think one of the considerations is that the trees are not suitable for splitting well, which any expert axeman will generally know at once by driving his axe into the side. Others are cut down and left to decay (or be burnt) for no assigned reason. Forestry being at a standstill, few trees are replanted, and these may be said to be more often foreign trees introduced for the sake of ornament.

Taking Australia generally, there is apparently no country having so great an extent of cultivated land with so few hands employed upon it. The crops are

what may be called half-crops, but it is better to have these than to bestow double labour on them. With cheap land for wheat and with the reaping machines employed to take it off the ground, the farmer finds a crop of 14 bushels per acre pays him very well. In this occupation South Australia takes the lead, and it has been reckoned that there are under tillage four acres for every man, woman, and child in the Colony, not a sixth part of the population being engaged in agriculture.

In 1855 it appears 30,000,000 acres were divided amongst some 660 persons, leased out to the squatters, the tenants of the Crown (for such is the proper designation of the Australian squatters), the original pioneers, sheep-farmers, *alias* shepherd-kings, at the rate of a quarter of a farthing an acre. The population of the Colony appears at this time to have been 120,000 or 130,000. It was proposed that from each squatter there should be taken 2000 or 3000 acres for agricultural purposes; there would still remain to them 27,000,000 or 28,000,000 acres. Land worth £10, £20, £30, or £40 an acre should not be leased out at the rate of a quarter of a farthing an acre. The squatters held whole territories at a mere song. One on the Murrumbidgee, about 1865, confessed that for the land on which he fed 78,000 sheep, bringing £13,000 a year net, he paid the State only £400 a year.

As wheat ripens very quickly, the climate being

dry and hot, a contrivance called the “stripper” is employed, which plucks off the ears of corn, leaving the straw standing. This machine will do about eight to ten acres a day. The “winnower” is a companion machine to the stripper, and winnows and bags about 300 bushels per day at a cost of about 2*d.* or 3*d.* per bushel. The freight from that distant land is about 30*s.* to 50*s.* per ton; yet the English farmer dreads importation, though we, I believe, are said to consume annually £100,000,000 worth of corn and cattle. Immense tracts of uncultivated land in Australasia remain idle that might with capital and labour certainly furnish a portion of this enormous supply. Sowing is done by a machine which sows 100 acres per day at the cost of about 3*d.* per acre.

In Australia wheat or oats in a green state are habitually cut for fodder; they are considered more nutritious than hay. In the ‘Field’ newspaper of August 12th, 1893, is mentioned a trial shipment of oat hay shipped from Geelong, in Victoria, and consigned to Messrs. Cruickshank and Lovell, of London.



CHAPTER VI.

RABBITS.—FOXES.—OPOSSUMS.—DINGOES.—DOGS.

RABBIT-TRAPPING is practised extensively in districts where rabbits have so multiplied as to have become an intolerable pest. They are so dreaded on some stations that when one rabbit has appeared, lest the number should increase, £5 reward is offered to get it killed. The entire enclosure of large areas of ground by sheets of galvanized iron or wire-netting stuck about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep in the soil has, in some cases in Australia, been successfully tried for exterminating them. They multiply so fast that, after devouring all the enclosed vegetation, they are literally starved to death. In New Zealand they tried stoats and pole-cats; they were liberated on their arrival, and in one case a batch of ten destroyed seven ducks, several miles distant from the point where they were set free.

The rabbits in the Colonies furnish annually enormous quantities of skins for the felting trade, New Zealand alone supplying close on 9,000,000 skins annually, valued at £88,000. Nevertheless the supply is less than the demand. The fur is used for making

soft felt hats, capes, trimmings, coats, boas, linings and edgings for boots and cuffs, which are often dyed various colours, and even imitation sealskin is manufactured from it. Some regular rabbit-trappers have highly-trained dogs, whose scent is extremely keen; and these animals, by their skill in detecting mislaid traps, save the trapper much time and trouble.

Foxes have been hunted in the neighbourhood of Melbourne. Riding is the exercise to which the majority of colonists are most accustomed from past habit, chiefly on sheep stations, where five to six hours daily in the saddle is a usual practice.

Opossums climb trees as the racoons do. They are sometimes hunted for their fur. The Australian opossum lives in the hollows of trees, and the female has a pouch under her belly, in which she places her young ones if at any time alarmed, and carries them away. The opossum is very cunning, and, on the approach of enemies, lies perfectly close to the branch, or places itself snugly in the angle where two limbs diverge. The hunter, ascending the tree, shakes the branch upon which the animal is seated, with great violence, so as to alarm it and cause it to relax its hold. In this way, driven from branch to branch, it is obliged at last to drop to the ground, where, unless the dogs are vigilant, the opossum escapes. In these circumstances it steals slowly and quietly to a little distance, and, gathering itself into a small compass, assumes the

stillness and attitude of death. This artifice, under the obscurity of night, and amidst dense rank herbage or tangled underwood, often proves successful. The prehensile power of the tail serves the animal in more ways than one, for it is stated that the young, when sufficiently grown, leap upon their mother's back when alarmed, and, twisting their tails round hers, escape, with her assistance, the threatened danger.

During the year 1891 two million and a quarter opossum skins arrived in England from Australia.

Dingoës, the native wild dogs, were once very numerous and destructive to sheep. A couple of these animals have been known to worry and kill 40 to 50 sheep in one night, leaving their mangled carcasses upon the ground, having apparently committed their ravages out of mere wanton mischief. The high price of £1 paid for their tails led to their being artificially imitated, and an unscrupulous Chinaman is said to have worked their skins into marketable tails and deceived even the knowing Government inspector; but his operations were watched, as his trade seemed rather remunerative, and his trick was eventually detected.

An interesting dingo story, showing the great sagacity of a spaniel, is perhaps worth recording. A flock of sheep were camped out under one man's care, with his spaniel "Missy." It being shearing-time, his two mates had left with the spaniel to conduct another flock to the head station, 50 miles away.

While they were gone a troublesome dingo during the night attacked the fold and frightened away the sheep. The man was aroused by the noise, and seizing his gun and ammunition he rushed forth and tried to turn the sheep back, but in vain, and at the pace they were going it was as much as he could do to follow them. The first light of day found him still in pursuit, with the sheep in sight. On seeing water they pulled up, and having slaked their thirst lay down as if fagged out. "And now to return home;—but I had not the slightest idea in which direction home lay. However, hunger now getting the better, I told myself I must eat. I had in my belt a knife, and flint and steel in my pocket, so having killed one of the sheep I was soon provided with a meal. Next night the sheep were off again, from the howlings of the dingo. I followed them up as best I could, but next night I saw that something must be done or I should not have a feather to fly with, or rather a bit of mutton to eat. Luckily the sheep this time encamped close to some more water, so I determined to try a dodge to kill the dingo. I reckoned it the best plan to set my trap close to the water-hole. I constructed it with my gun, somewhat after the fashion of those used by English game-keepers to destroy vermin, called, I think, spring-guns. Late in the night my heavily-shotted gun went off, and taking a brand from the fire I went over to my trap, and there had the satisfaction of finding

my enemy, a huge dingo, stone-dead. After that I slept very contentedly. But when I awoke I found, to my consternation, my flock gone. For several days I hunted for the runaways and each night returned to the water-hole unsuccessful. I determined at length to make tracks in the direction I felt most inclined to consider my hut lay, but that night while I slept I felt something licking my face, and, lo and behold, as I woke up I found it to be my darling little spaniel ‘Missy,’ who in her wonderful sagacity, after the return of the two shepherds from the head station, finding me missing, set off alone on my trail and had eventually found me. In the morning I softly whispered to her, ‘Home! dear Missy, home!’ My intelligent little guide trotted in advance, holding an opposite direction to that I had planned out for myself. We pursued our way till evening, when we stood on the ridge of a high hill. ‘Missy’ barked; I looked about and saw in the valley a twinkling light—it was the hut—I was saved. On arrival my mates informed me that they had scoured the bush in all directions for me, which had been fruitless. Yet by this means nearly all the sheep except 70 or 80 had been discovered.” *

It is not uncommon in Australia and New Zealand to see vicious dogs, which bite sheep, peculiarly muzzled to restrain them from this ill habit. A tin

* Abridged from the ‘Leisure Hour.’

tack is placed at the end of a specially-made loose cross-strap muzzle, about an inch above the dog's nose, so that, when the dogs open their mouths to snap at or bite the sheep, the sharp point of the tin tack pricks their noses. Valuable dogs often have wooden bits placed in their mouths like horses; these prevent them from swallowing poisoned food, which is sometimes maliciously placed down for them. Specially-made pads (or boots), usually of sheep-skin, are employed sometimes put on the feet of foot-sore dogs after they have been days at work sheep-mustering or have travelled great distances over hot plains.



CHAPTER VII.

KANGAROOS AND KANGAROO-HUNTING.

By the regular hunter the kangaroo is often shot on the plains with the rifle, but for greater sport these animals are often hunted with dogs of the Scotch deerhound breed, between the greyhound and bulldog, fierce, powerful, and very fleet for the course. Many of these dogs are sometimes kept at the stock-stations of the interior for the sole purpose of running the kangaroo and the emu. The latter was formerly killed solely for the supply of oil which it yields, and the former for mere sport, or for food for the dogs. Three or four dogs are generally laid on, one of superior fleetness to pull the kangaroo, while the others rush in upon and kill it. When stripped, the hides of these animals are nailed on trees for a short time to dry, then packed in bundles and sold. If one is careful enough to cut off and keep the ears, one is likely to get a small perquisite for them from the nearest station. The female kangaroo's extremely tender care of her young is remarkable. Occasionally she lets them out by day to graze on tender herbage, conveying them across rivers or through forest, never

abandoning them, even when pursued by enemies, until they are able to provide for their own sustenance and safety.

The aborigines have an old saying, "Where white man sit down, kangaroo go away." Although naturally timid, when it is hard pressed it turns to bay, with its back set against a tree. The buck becomes a formidable antagonist to the best dogs. The doe, on the contrary, is a very timid creature, and has been known to die of fear. The kangaroo will rip up the dogs with its powerful claws, of which there are five on each of its fore-paws and three talons on each of its hind legs, or it will hug them so tightly with the fore-arms as to cause the blood to gush from the hounds' nostrils. Sometimes, taking to the water, it will drown every dog that comes near it. Most of the kangaroo's strength is concentrated in its hind legs and tail; the other parts are comparatively weak. It is a dangerous antagonist at close quarters, its wrestling and boxing qualifications being very considerable. Moreover, the fore-toe of its hind feet is armed with a claw like a marline-spike. The skin of the kangaroo supplies fur when young; when the animal is full-grown the hide is used for leather. Kangaroos are sometimes taken by snares laid at the bottom of fences, in spurs, or places where they may have been noticed to have just scraped away a little earth, so as to make room to creep underneath the fence. These lasso-like

snares are usually made of a piece of raw hide, stoutish cord or wire, having a running noose, so that when the kangaroo attempts to creep through the space he gets his head through, but his shoulders coming in contact with the snare draw the noose tighter the more he presses, so that at length he either strangles himself or is found in a very exhausted condition.

The merit of the kangaroo's tail is sometimes acknowledged by making soup of it. The animal is said to have a grasshopper's hind legs, a rat's fore-paws, and a coat partly resembling the rabbit and partly the rat. In place of a cradle the mother-kangaroo is provided with a pouch in which she lays her babies. The young kangaroos would fare ill without this secure retreat and snug hiding-place on the least sign of danger.

In Van Diemen's Land, or, as it is now more often called, Tasmania, the great kangaroo was regularly hunted with foxhounds, as the deer or fox is hunted in England. The sport was said to be excellent. Mr. Gregson says in a letter to Mr. Gould :—

“ I recollect one day in particular when a very fine boomer jumped up in the very middle of the hounds, in the open. He at first took a few very high jumps with his head up, and then, without a moment's hesitation, he stooped forward and shot away from the hounds apparently without effort, and gave us the longest run I ever saw after a kangaroo. He ran

fourteen miles by the map from point to point, and, if he had had fair play, I have little doubt that he would have beaten us. But he had taken along a tongue of land that ran into the sea, so that on being hard pressed he was forced to try to swim across the arm of the sea, which cannot have been less than two miles broad. In spite of a fresh breeze and a head sea against him he got fully halfway over ; but he could not make head against the waves any farther, and was obliged to turn back, when, being quite exhausted, he was soon killed. The distance he ran, taking the different bends of the line, was not less than eighteen miles. He was far before the hounds and quite fresh when he took to the water. His hind quarters weighed nearly seventy pounds. We did not measure the distance of the hop of this kangaroo, but on another occasion, on which the boomer had taken along the beach and left his prints in the sand, the length of each jump was found to be fifteen feet, and as regular as if they had been stepped by a sergeant."

The native employed several modes of capturing the kangaroo. Sometimes he stole upon it, under the covert of the trees and bushes, till within range of his unerring spear. Occasionally numbers of men united in a large party, and, forming a circle, gradually closed in upon the animals with shouts and yells, by which the animals were so terrified and confused that they easily became victims to the boomerangs, clubs,

and spears which were directed from all sides against them.

The latest mode of kangaroo-hunting is practised by means of kangaroo pits. These sheer-sided pits, which may be 9 or 12 feet deep, 18 broad, and the same in length, are enclosed by extemporized high hedges of cut wood and shrub, which are very wide apart at one end, narrowing gradually up to the pit, slightly before which may be stretched a single loose fence-wire, about 3 feet off the ground. By the united efforts of numbers of men and boys on horseback, an immense extent of territory can be cleared of the kangaroos, which are driven by the horsemen into the broad extremity of the A-shaped triangle. The space between the high hedges gradually lessening, the kangaroos, as they are driven forward, come to the wire and in clearing it fall into the pit, from the top of which it is easy to kill them with bludgeons or "waddies," the native name for a sort of club or stout knobbed stick.

"Joeys" are the young kangaroos. The wallaby is a smaller variety, bearing the same proportion to its larger *confrère*, the forester, as the rabbit does to the hare. Kangaroos, when hard pressed, have been known to bound over a man on horseback. Some of their springs have measured 22 feet in length. In feeding they assume a crouching, hare-like position, resting on the fore-paws as well as on the hinder extremities while they browse on the herbage.

Sometimes, when excited, the old male of the great kangaroo stands on tiptoe and on his tail, and is then of prodigious height. In fighting he balances himself for a moment on his tail, and strikes forward with both his hind legs, using his fore-paws at the same time. The great kangaroo is not, strictly speaking, gregarious ; more than six or eight are seldom seen together ; most frequently it is met with singly or in pairs. The kind of country it prefers consists of low grassy hills and plains skirted by thin open forest or brushwood, to which it resorts for shelter from the oppressive heat of the mid-day sun. The male greatly exceeds the female in size, measuring 7 feet 10 inches from the nose to the extremity of the tail, the length of the female being little more than 3 feet. Instances have occurred of the weight being 220 pounds. A kangaroo eats three times as much grass as a sheep.



CHAPTER VIII.

HORSES.—CAMELS.

THE horse is to the colonist what the collie is to the Highlander; neither man could do without the sagacious brute. The best horses and those usually prized most by the colonists are of a dark colour, more especially if a black streak is discernible running down the entire length of their backs; those with this mark are highly prized, as they are supposed to be of the hardiest breed. The streak is generally more noticed on the colonial than on the English horse. Of course, on a really black horse the streak is not to be distinguished. White and grey horses are never estimated very highly, as they never, from some cause or other, appear able to stand the fatigue or hardship borne by their darker brethren. Greys are a serviceable colour, but white horses are very uncertain bargains; they are usually thought handsome, but said to be generally unsound—why particularly I don't know. No white horse has ever been a racehorse. A horse is said to have a cloud on his face when he has a black or dark-coloured spot on his forehead between

the eyes. This frequently gives him a sour look, and is supposed to indicate an ill temper. Colonial horses, especially those used by stock-riders, creep up acclivities like cats. When a man is "off" a stock-horse seldom bolts; it is trained to "stand."

Surplus horses in Australia, more particularly in Western Australia, were bought up by dealers who retailed them chiefly in India, though a few were sold for the Straits and Mauritius. Boats plied at intervals with special arrangements for carrying them, in numbers varying from 500 to 800, besides general cargo. Generally sailing-vessels were employed; they averaged about five weeks or a little more on the passage, India being what might be almost called the halfway house between England and Australia; time in India being, I believe, reckoned five hours in advance of London, and in Australia 10 hours. The boats often encountered very boisterous weather, during which the horses had to be suspended or slung about a foot from the ground between decks, otherwise a horse might fall, and in its struggles do mischief to others. Should one accidentally fall, it had to be quickly killed, or probably it would cause severe loss amongst the rest. The horses frequently arrived in very poor condition, but they soon gained stamina after their arrival. Sometimes after lengthy passages they were immediately sold by auction, often realizing appreciative prices to the dealer's satisfaction. In export £30 to £35,

would be considered a long price to give for the best mounts.

Colonists' love of their horses is remarkable ; it is said a man will walk a mile to get a mile's ride. In Australia jockey clubs and Tattersalls are scattered throughout the country.

Catching stubborn horses in the paddock, a space usually set apart solely for horses, is sometimes practised as follows :—A long light rope, about the thickness of a clothes-line, and 30 or more yards long, is taken at full stretch by two men. The horse intended to be caught, being followed as close as possible, is run up into an angle of the fence, where it can be caught and bridled. Sometimes a thin noosed line on a pole is employed to catch it. The noose is placed at the end of the pole, and, if properly fixed, is easily let off with a jerk, lassoing the horse by the neck ; the lower end of the rope, which passes at the back of the pole, is retained in the hand, the rope being thrown off. One thus retains the end, which, being drawn with a jerk, tightens round the horse's neck. This elaborate mode of catching horses is not usually resorted to unless they are more or less vicious, with kicking and biting propensities.

Brumbies are a kind of wild horses that are not aboriginal, but the offspring of imported mares that at some time strayed from the herd and took to the bush. I think they are now nowhere to be found except in a few unfrequented back blocks.

In yarding wild horses the captive is roped, saddled, and bridled in an incredibly short space of time, and is then led by stockmen to some open space apart from timber or fences. The fearless rider, having carefully examined each particular strapping, mounts with the agility of an acrobat. For a moment there is a pause; then the struggle begins, the fiery steed plunges and bucks, but the jockey is immovable—horse and man are one. The battle is short, sharp, and decisive, and in less than half an hour the child of the bush, covered with foam and trembling in every limb, succumbs to the indomitable will of its master,—man. Its spirit is broken, its courage gone, and every day brings forth fresh evidences that the brumby, with few exceptions, was never intended to represent the “survival of the fittest.”*

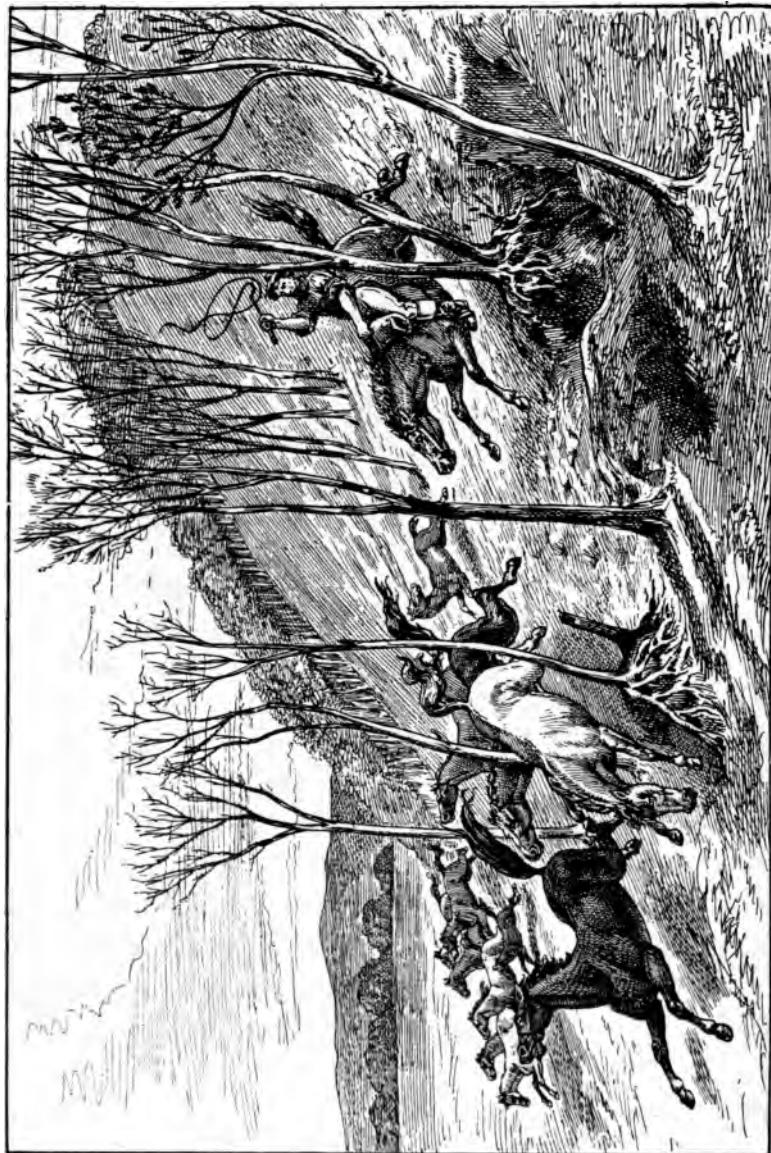
Horses, in some parts of the country, are not shod. I once got kicked by an unshod horse in endeavouring to catch it, and lay for some time in great pain on the ground, but I think it luckily struck me halfway—that is, at close quarters—so I did not get the full force of the blow.

Horses are found occasionally very averse to leaving good pastures, and stubbornly refuse to be driven therefrom. In this case a rope is put round their necks and they are beaten forward with sticks and stones.

The country saddles are usually better and more

* ‘Land and Water,’ August 22nd, 1891.

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RUNNING-IN HORSES FROM THE BUSH.

reliably made in the Colonies than in England. One made in England will cost £5, in Australia £6. But then there is a duty on English saddlery. These saddles are very comfortable to ride in, are slightly bent up at the back, and have in front good-sized knee-pads. These pads, besides wedging you firmer in the saddle, afford protection when riding through scrub or low bush, as otherwise you might break your leg or at least get some very ugly knocks. Falling out of the saddle is rare, but a practicable though dangerous way of doing so has been found out by persons riding together, which is as follows:—When the horses are going neck-and-neck and at an average fast pace, if an opponent places his foot quickly under your stirrup and jerks it up, he tips you over, and from loss of balance you are probably thrown.

Australian horses have been considered far superior to those of the adjacent island of New Zealand.* But the Auckland Stud Company have purchased some high-bred stock, and the gradual improvement effected, it is now hoped, is marking a new era. Horses have frequently queer names; for instance, the first horse I remember riding in Australia was called "Gummy." This peculiar name was given it because it had run against a gum-tree and knocked out several of its teeth. Some of the reasons for names are amusing. Somebody having remarked "Ain't this a queer

* Though over 1000 miles away, this distance is reckoned comparatively small by an Australian.

place?" and the person addressed replying "Believe yer!" the place in question was thenceforward called "Bolivia." So, too, in sarcasm, a rough-looking gorge was named "Paradise."

Camels were formerly, and I believe are still, used for drawing coaches, four in a team, in the more intractable parts of Australia. They came chiefly from Afghanistan, and were landed at Adelaide by Afghans. They were largely utilized in constructing the Gippsland railway in Victoria and in the earlier exploration of the interior of Australia.



CHAPTER IX.

**EMUS.—PARROTS.—PELICANS.—PHEASANTS.—PLOVERS.—
QUAILS.—VULTURES.**

EMUS, with the aid of a red flag, may be decoyed to the muzzle of a gun. They are very fond of pecking at nails in fences, or any bright or shiny substance. Their eggs, like those of the wild swan, are often carved or painted. The mode of hunting them is mostly a test of endurance between horse and bird, the former usually winning if fast and in average good condition. When the emu is running at full speed it drops its tail and makes a rustling sound with the long tail-feathers that might alarm a horse fresh to the work. It throws back its head and seems to run almost erect. When tiring it straddles its legs wider and wider apart, and so it runs on until it falls exhausted. It is hunted for the sake of its skin; but the bird is so timid that few genuine sportsmen care to gallop a second one.

The emu's favourite resort is on the extensive plains far from inhabited districts. It is a very shy bird, and a man on foot can hardly appear as a speck on the horizon but it is off; yet on horseback he can

approach tolerably close. The pace it keeps up when at full speed for two miles is tremendous ; it instinctively makes for the nearest timber, where, should it happen to be three or four miles off, there is little chance of it being taken, but at ten miles' distance its escape is doubtful, as it cannot stand fatigue like the horse and dog, and each mile tells fearfully against it. Though timid, it is known sometimes to face its pursuers, finding escape impossible, and defend itself for an hour or more with its beak, feet, and wings.

The savages capture emus by the subtle expedient of hiding in the skin of one, and, with one arm up through the neck, imitating with wonderful fidelity the movements of the bird—pecking on the ground and scratching with the feet, &c. By these means they are able to approach quite near and kill one or two without materially disturbing the rest. So similarly do they “make up” that at short distances they may readily be mistaken for emus, and instances are on record of sportsmen firing at them and wounding them when thus disguised.

Parrots are sometimes netted in great numbers. They are mostly the beautiful, common, noisy, white species that abound at certain periods in many districts. They are usually caught and killed for their skins, which after being stripped are preserved ; and eventually large quantities of them find their way to bird-fanciers, chiefly in America. These birds fight

terribly amongst themselves when caught, often appearing like perfect balls, rolling over, tugging and cuffing, often killing one another, or the bird-catcher has purposely to kill them in order to extricate them. It is not unusual for the bird-catcher to wear special gauntlets to prevent injury to his hands. The value of a good live bird is perhaps about 2s. 6d., but they are generally hard to sell alive, especially in the Colonies, though well-trained ones have been known to realize extremely good prices. Station complaints against bird-catchers are rare. On some stations cockatoos are considered a veritable pest, a small price being paid for each of their crests, and boys are put on guard from morning to night to prevent crops from being plundered.

The pelican of the wilderness, during some parts of the year, may be seen in large numbers. The common belief is that its nest has never been discovered. The tradition that these birds nourish their young with their own blood is remarkable, but I am not aware that it has been proved by ocular demonstration.

In the neighbourhood of both Sydney and Melbourne, pheasants have been introduced with some small degree of success, but are strictly preserved for the landowners' special amusement. So also are quails in Victoria, which are said to afford some capital sport.

The vultures of Australia, feeding on carrion

(dead horses, cattle, or sheep), are sometimes found, especially during drought, so gorged as to be quite unable to rise from the ground. With care and a stout stick they may easily be killed by being knocked on the head, but they may prove dangerous if you venture too close within reach of their talons.

In Australia it is curious and interesting to watch the plovers jiggling round and round, flapping their wings, and running at intruding sheep, in fact trying all sorts of comical antics to prevent the sheep from stepping on their nests. Even snakes will rise erect and hiss and snap at sheep, but they cannot do much harm, because the sheep are protected by their wool.



CHAPTER X.

SNAKES !

OF venomous snakes, the black snake, once rather common in Tasmania, now chiefly found in Queensland, was so dangerous to the early settlers in Tasmania that pedestrians found it necessary to wear woollen leggings up to the knee, which were supposed to absorb the poison from the fangs before they could puncture the flesh. Instances have been known of snakes getting into the beds of the colonists to enjoy the warmth of the blankets. Sometimes it would be the carpet-snake, a non-venomous reptile, the largest species measuring 10 or 12 feet in length. But at the sight of the black snake one might well shudder and seek its immediate destruction. These venomous brutes so frequently bit or stung not only human beings but also the live stock of the settlers that the people petitioned Government to remedy the evil. Unfortunately the Government did not apparently know how to do this. Ultimately Lady Franklin, wife of Sir John Franklin, the Arctic explorer (then Governor of Tasmania), undertook the matter at her own personal cost, without waiting for the grant from

the Legislature for this purpose. After consulting settlers and authorities in the interior, it was decided that for every head of a black or other venomous snake that was brought to the nearest magistrate a shilling should be paid, and that the heads should be destroyed by fire to prevent their being resold. Many people went snake-hunting, and the extermination of the black snake progressed so fast that in one year the sum of £750 was paid by the magistrates, showing that 15,000 black snakes had been killed.

There are several varieties of snakes, some of which are variegated, that are mostly harmless. The skins of these, when dried and oiled to prevent their cracking, have been used by Colonials for waist-belts. Snakes sometimes have holes in the rock or ground ; on entering these they leave their tails protruding, and can then be easily taken by not over-squeamish people.

The gambols of snakes in the sunshine are said by some observers to be highly interesting and playful. The female snake is said to show extreme care in watching and defending her young, even going the length of swallowing them when alarmed, snakes having been killed containing a quantity they have disposed of in this way. As a rule snakes slink off at the least sign of danger, seldom showing fight unless they are surprised.

One method adopted by the natives in snake-hunting seems very ingenious. As the snakes princi-

pally inhabit holes in the ground, and most often at the roots of grass-trees, the crafty native, to find the hole which one inhabits, employs the following means :—He puts a little putty-like clay round the mouths of these “retreats,” and returning next day searches carefully for signs of a snake having crawled in or out at those holes having an occupant. In the foliage of the tree he also places a small drop of honey, which the snake likes immensely. The native now conceals himself near to watch the game. It is not often long before the sly reptile is seen creeping out, stealthily at first; but, gaining courage as it proceeds, it is enticed by the delicious morsel. Slowly it climbs the grass-tree, but no sooner has its head disappeared among the grass-like leaves than the snake-hunter attacks it. Armed with his spear, which has a forked end to it, and his 'possum-skin rug, he challenges the snake to the combat by plunging his weapon into the tree-top. His intention is not to kill the snake but to take it alive, as this is considered the greatest perfection of skill. The native now wounding the snake, it glides down and assumes a hostile attitude. The watchful savage, as the reptile strikes, parries the attack with the 'possum skin he uses as a shield. The snake, now quickly changing its tactics, erects itself to its full extent, and just as it is about to strike, the native, still holding his rug before him, moves rapidly aside to evade its onset. The snake

now by its own impetus measures its full length on the ground, when without the least hesitation the savage places on its neck the "bobo," or forked stick, around which it then coils itself. Snake and "bobo" are now securely enclosed in a net, and the victor triumphantly bears the reptile to camp, where possibly at supper or next day's meal it is relished as the daintiest morsel by the hungry savage.



CHAPTER XI.

AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINALS.—ACUTENESS OF EYE AND EAR.—MIMICRY OF
EUROPEANS.—FOOD.—TREE-CLIMBING.—DWELLINGS.—“GOEBONG.”
—LAWS OF THE CHASE.—SKILLED THROWERS.—THE BOOMERANG.

THE senses or perceptive faculties of most savages, for instance the aboriginal Australian black, are infinitely more acute than ours ; they will point out objects in the thickest branches or bushes where one of us would not be able to perceive them.

The aborigines of Australia are said to have been habitual and clever mimics, and the peculiarities in dress, walk, and aspect of all Europeans were so exactly imitated among them as to form a kind of mirror reflecting their several actions and characters. The aborigines of the interior of Australia are stated formerly to have lived on grubs, ants and their eggs, kangaroo, fern roots, berries, and honey. These sylvan satyrs have been described as having had long and lean arms and legs, owing, as it is supposed, to their practice of climbing trees, which they do in most parts by means of notches cut in them, formerly with stone hatchets, in which they place the big toe, ascending by these means trees of great height.

Another method is by the assistance of a wisp or band of "creeper," which is used as a rope or hoop, encircling the tree-stem and the climber's waist, and resembling the mode of climbing date-palms practised at Elche in Spain. The former method is generally adopted. The inclination of the tree being well viewed, the climber commences by cutting a notch about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the ground. This depends greatly upon the individual; for it is a remarkable fact that two natives will not ascend by each other's notches or steps, even though the tree has been climbed by several of them. The climber then cuts another notch, from two to three feet higher, for his left foot; and when this is done he fixes his tomahawk as high as he can reach into the tree, and holding by it ascends the first two notches. His left great toe being in the second cut, he stands supporting his whole weight upon it, with his left arm round the tree, and then makes two more notches as before. In this manner the natives get up immense trees with as much celerity and confidence as a European mounts a ladder.

The aborigines had no fixed habitations, the climate generally allowing of their sleeping in the open air, in the crevices of rocks, or under the shelter of bushes. A few strips of bark torn from the nearest tree, being propped on sticks, served as a protection against the weather. They were destitute of furniture or domestic conveniences of any description. Their largest clans extended not beyond the family circle, the eldest son

in each family being called by a name synonymous with that of father.

To protect certain animals indigenous to their country was held a sacred duty by the Australian aborigines, for it was the custom of these people to select from them one for a crest or symbol which they called "goebong."

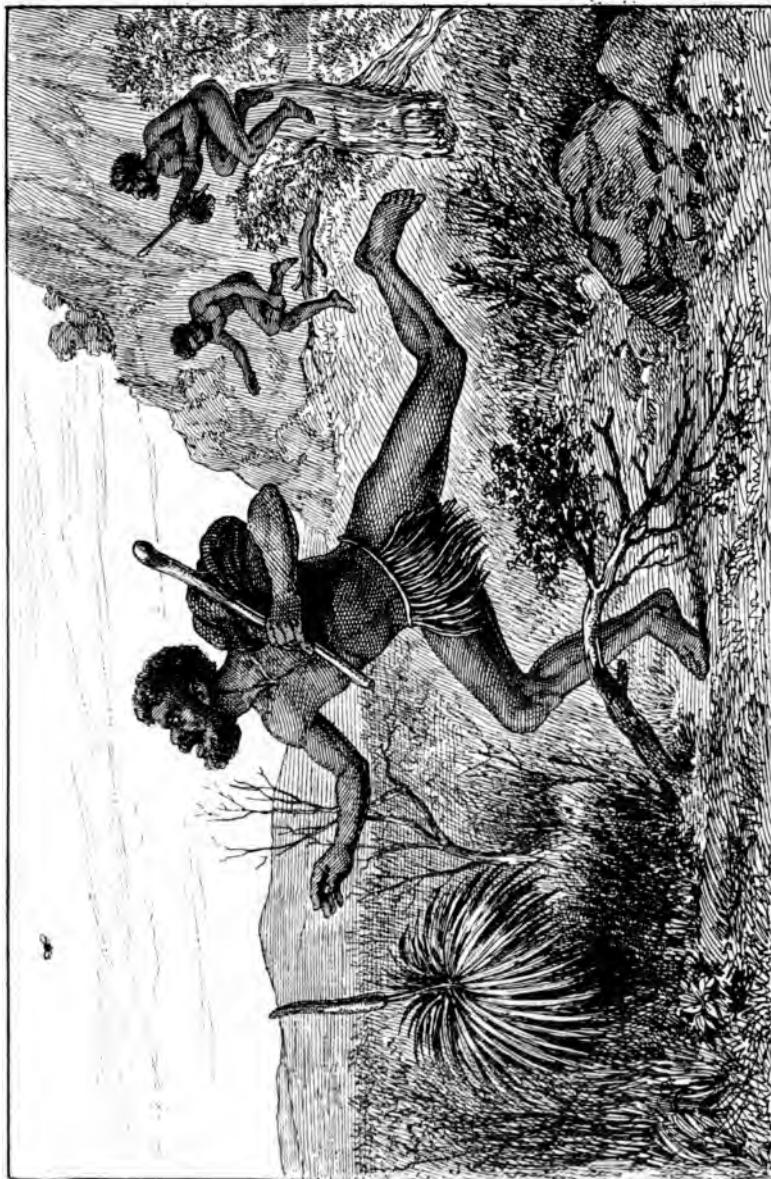
The Queensland blacks had a rule, to which they are said formerly to have strictly adhered, that those animals which were most easily caught were to be left a prey to the older members of the tribe, the younger men being bidden to hunt the fleeter animals.

The Australian aborigines, even the youngsters, are very skilful in the precision with which they throw missiles or projectiles of various kinds. These people have been known to take up stones with their feet and throw them with almost as accurate an aim as ordinary men will with their hands. With a piece of slightly curved thick bark, hastily torn from a tree, they are able to hit another person though he stands behind the shelter of another tree. The instrument so used is an extemporized "boomerang" or "kylie." The boomerangs used in England have a sharper curve than the Australian, which is made of a curved piece of wood, flat on one side and slightly rounded on the other. It was much used by the natives, who could throw it very dexterously. It should be held horizontally in throwing, and cast by bringing

the arm backwards. After making a variety of curves, it will come back to the person who threw it. If skilfully thrown, it may be made to go in almost any direction the thrower pleases. The native boomerangs are of various kinds. Some are for throwing at game; the war boomerang is a heavy instrument, unfit to throw; the returning boomerang, more suited for amusement than utility, has a circular course, and though sometimes thrown at animals is unfit for the purpose. But a special boomerang is made for hunting animals, and, thrown by a native, sometimes exceeds the prodigious distance of 200 yards. The throw of a cricket-ball by an aboriginal, I believe, covering the great distance of 130 yards, was authenticated in a newspaper during 1888.



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NATIVE AUSTRALIAN BEE-HUNTERS.

CHAPTER XII.

NATIVE AUSTRALIAN BEE-HUNTERS.—SAVAGE SKILL IN “DISAPPEARING.”
—NUMERICAL STATUS OF ABORIGINAL TASMANIANS.

AN IRISHMAN, to give an idea of a man's ingenuity, says “he bates the bees,” but the Australian aboriginal “bates the bees” in earnest, and it has been often a matter of surprise how infallibly the natives could get honey. On inquiry one is told they watch the bee coming to drink and then follow it home. To be more explicit, I append the following description of a bee-hunt, with the accompanying illustration*:
—

“Warryallàh,” the chief of a tribe on the Upper Darling River, repaired with two little nets to a small pool a short distance away, filled his mouth with some water, and then lying down, his head hanging over the pool, he remained perfectly quiet for a length of time. An hour, I am sure, passed away, and I was beginning to feel tired of watching a man apparently looking at his own shadow in the water, when the hum of a bee attracted my attention.

* To the left in the picture is shown a grass-tree in flower. Grass-trees have been mentioned in the chapter on Snakes.

Buz-z-z it went over the pool and round the glossy head of my sable companion, now on one side, now on the other, now close to his ear, and now dancing before his eyes ; but not a motion betrayed the “bee-hunter.” Indifferent as a stone to everything but his purpose, he showed no sign of life until the bee, dropping close to the water, gave notice by the change of its tune that it was about to sip. Suddenly, with a snort, Warryallàh discharged the water from his mouth over the little “buzzer,” and before it had time to recover from the effects of this unexpected douche, he seized it in a most dexterous manner by the wings and proceeded to prepare it for the chase. This he did by fastening to it a bunch of flocculent wild cotton with some resinous gum. The hunter now explained that as soon as he let the bee go it would make for the hive, and the cotton which he had fastened on would serve the twofold purpose of impeding its progress and showing a mark in the air for him to follow. We were soon joined by some of the tribe, and the bee was let go. Away it went, at first slowly, its novel burden causing it to emit a most strange note ; and away the natives went after this little aeronaut over bramble and brake. In the course of half an hour, however, I came up with them. They had stopped at the foot of an immense gum-tree, into the top of which, I was informed the bee had gone. Warryallàh quickly mounted with his stone tomahawk, and in the course

of a short time he brought down a quantity of honey-comb, a small piece only of which contained honey.

Perhaps it is as well here to state that the native Australian bees are stingless. The bees of New Zealand are not indigenous, but have been introduced from other lands.

In 1830 martial law was declared in Van Diemen's Land, as it was then called, owing to the depredations, burnings, and murders committed by the blacks. By proclamation the whole population were commanded to assist in an attempt to secure the safety of the entire white race by forming in line across the island, which is nearly as large as Ireland. They tried to drive the natives into a *cul-de-sac* on Tasman's Peninsula; but this failed, the wily natives creeping through the lines during the night. No doubt, perceiving the superior strength and numbers of the whites in this hunting-match, they became alarmed. A party of thirteen, belonging to two tribes, shortly came in and delivered themselves up. After this a Mr. Robinson fearlessly visited by himself the hostile natives and induced them to do likewise. They were eventually removed to another island, where food and clothing were provided for them.

In speaking of their remarkable skill in making themselves invisible, aided by their dusky form and probably by atmospheric influences, Charles Darwin*

* 'A Naturalist's Voyage round the World in H.M.S. 'Beagle.'

remarks :—“I have been assured that they can conceal themselves on almost bare ground, in a manner which until witnessed is scarcely credible; their dusky bodies being easily mistaken for the blackened stumps which are scattered all over the country.” He adds further :—“I was told of a trial between a party of Englishmen and a native, who was to stand in full view on the side of a bare hill; if the Englishmen closed their eyes for less than a minute, he would squat down, and then they were never able to distinguish him from the surrounding stumps.”

Speaking of the numerical *status* of the natives, Count Strzelecki observes * that “at the epoch of their deportation in 1835 the number of natives amounted to 210. In 1842—that is, after the interval of seven years—they mustered only 54 individuals; and while each family of the interior of New South Wales, uncontaminated by contact with the whites, swarms with children, those of Flinders Island had during eight years an accession of only fourteen in number!”

* ‘Physical Description of New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land,’ p. 354.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE EXPEDITION OF BURKE AND WILLS.

THE Australian exploring expedition of Messrs. Burke and Wills started from Melbourne Royal Park August 20th, 1860. In connection with this subject the following details from the 'Melbourne Herald' of November 26th, 1862, are of historic interest:—

"The continent has been crossed by Burke and his companions, and when returning to Cooper's Creek, almost within the bounds of civilization, and where they expected succour after the exhaustion caused by their arduous journey, they found that the dépôt party had left a few hours before. They were unable from exhaustion to follow them; and they made an ineffectual effort to reach the settled districts of South Australia, but were compelled to return. The party consisted of Messrs. Burke and Wills, the leader and the second in command, and of Gray and King, two subordinates. Gray died from exhaustion, consequent upon fatigue and insufficiency of food, on the return journey from Carpentaria to Cooper's Creek, and the unfortunate fate of Burke and Wills is disclosed in

the annexed details. On Saturday evening, the 2nd of November, the sad intelligence was received in town from Sandhurst, announcing the arrival there of Mr. Brake, a member of Mr. Howitt's exploring party, with despatches of the first importance from that gentleman, relating to the fate of the expedition under the command of Mr. Burke. It soon transpired that Mr. Howitt's party had obtained unimpeachable evidence of the successful accomplishment, by Mr. Burke and his companions, of the object of the expedition, but that the intrepid explorers had, with a single exception, lost their lives, after rendering this great service to their country. The principal facts disclosed are as follows:—Messrs. Burke, Wills, and King arrived at Cooper's Creek on the 21st of April, only a few hours after the departure of Mr. Brake, on his return to Menindie, with the dépôt party. Mr. Burke states his disappointment at finding the station abandoned. In the handwriting of Mr. Wills is conveyed the information that the unfortunate gentlemen were disabled from following in the track of Mr. Brake's party through the inability of the camels to travel. They subsequently endeavoured to reach Mount Hopeless, having been informed before they left Melbourne that there was a cattle-station within a distance of 150 miles from Cooper's Creek. One of their camels got bogged, and the party being too weak to extricate it, they were compelled to shoot it. They cured some of the flesh and 'planted' it, taking

a portion of the meat with them. They also obtained some 'nardoo,' a description of farinaceous berry upon which the natives chiefly subsisted. Being compelled to abandon the attempt to make the Mount, they returned to the creek, having been obliged to slaughter the remaining camel by the way. The flesh of the animal having enabled them to recruit their store of provisions, they again started for the South Australian country, but were a second time foiled through want of water. Their food now seems to have consisted almost entirely of nardoo, which King had been fortunate enough to find. They determined to again try to reach Mount Hopeless, but the party were so exhausted by fatigue and hunger that it was first of all necessary to obtain sufficient food to sustain their strength. Messrs. Burke and King accordingly set out with the object of getting provisions from the natives, Mr. Wills, unable from excessive debility to accompany them, being left behind at his own express request with sufficient nardoo to last eight days. Mr. Burke died three days after leaving from exhaustion. Two days afterwards King came upon a native gunyah [hut], and found a quantity of nardoo which the blacks had stored there. He rested two days, and then returned to Cooper's Creek, where he found the corpse of Mr. Wills, that unfortunate gentleman having succumbed to his sufferings in the interval. King, the only survivor of the party, soon after fell in with a

party of natives, and remained with them until Mr. Howitt came up.

“Such are the leading features of the incidents connected with the lamentable history of the explorers after their return from having solved the great geographical problem which has cost many valuable lives and an immense amount of treasure in attempts to unravel it. The continent of Australia has been traversed throughout its extent, but of the heroic men who accomplished this tremendous task only one survived.”



PART II.

NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND.

CHAPTER I.

MAORI MEN AND WOMEN.—OCCUPATIONS, HABITS, AND TASTES.—THE PATUKA.—HORSEMANSHIP.—VILLAGES.—ANCIENT WEAPONS.—CANOE-CARVING.—TATTOOING.—BRAVERY.—“PAHS,” AND “HIP-PAHS” OR STRONGHOLDS.—ORAKAU PAH.—MANIFESTO OF KING MATUTAERA POTATAU.

IN reviewing the characteristic peculiarities of the natives of New Zealand, we find most of them, the men as well as the women, of fair proportions, and far from ill-favoured. Indeed, the women are declared by many authorities to be really good-looking when young, though ugly when old.

The Maoris are very fond of tobacco. The women like the bright gaudy colours of printed cottons for dresses and “Brummagem” sham jewellery ; the men patronize more the blankets of showy designs. They have no objection to spirits,—rum, brandy, or whisky,—but as yet I have never seen any who care much for beer. Tobacco and the articles of necessary clothing, with now and then a bottle of spirits, are their chief requisitions at the stores scattered

throughout the districts. When they are hard-up for these they will often dig for gum (see p. 117), or you may find them working at the saw-mills. They appear strong, active, and willing workers for periods of a few weeks at a stretch. They become very expert with the axe, saw, and jack, the principal tools employed in this trade. They are also mostly adepts in the rafting business, as the shoals and sandbanks in the rivers are better known to them than to Europeans. The natives sometimes go about bare-headed or with only a handkerchief wrapped round their heads. They usually conform to the European mode of dress, but at their "wharres" (or dwellings) they are often just simply wrapped in a blanket. Boots seem to hurt their feet, and even in towns they will at times walk about bare-footed, carrying their boots in their hand.

Formerly the natives of New Zealand used to offer for sale fruit, fish, greenstone, &c., on the arrival of vessels at ports of call. About 1860, trading ships, when anchoring, were forced to run up boarding-nets. The Maoris now mostly appear to be extremely lazy; the little work they do, as in the gum-digging line and at the saw-mills, only being done periodically. Occasionally they go whaling, there being several coasting whale-boats which are the sole property of the northern natives, but of late years I have never known of their catching a whale. These boats bear a strong resemblance to a lifeboat, are manned by

twelve or more rowers, and travel very swiftly. Formerly whales used to be tolerably plentiful about the New Zealand coast, but now they are rather seldom seen.

Maori meals are frequently taken out of one caldron amongst a family or more; they dip sticks or their hands into it and take out its contents as required. For their supply of kindling wood I have known natives retain almost an entire tree that has been brought down during a flood and landed high and dry on the bank in close proximity to their hut. As they required any firewood they would go out and chip it off the immense block. They live chiefly on fish and shell-fish, pork, the kumera or sweet potato, and the ordinary potato. Their cultivations, in which they often grow melons, maize, and potatoes, usually grow only enough for their own consumption.

The patuka, or storehouse of the New Zealander, was shaped like a small shed with a sloping thatched roof, placed on an upright wooden pillar several feet above the ground, in which maize, seeds, &c., were kept in security from the rats. Access to the interior was obtained by a sort of ladder, and the apex of the front gable was surmounted by a rudely carved head.

On horseback the men ride fairly well, sometimes without saddle. When riding with saddle and stirrups they often place their bare toes between the side-irons instead of through the stirrups. For an

extemporized bridle the horses have sometimes a piece of string or native flax tied round their muzzle. It is not unfrequent to see the men riding and the women walking when they are journeying with an insufficient number of horses.

The native villages or settlements are frequently called by rather elaborate Maori names: for instance, "Ruhi tahi,"* which signifies "Rest in peace"; but to Europeans they are generally known by the chief's name, as Old Joe's Settlement. The houses in these settlements, which are often very scattered, being hundreds of yards apart, are now in general not built of rushes as formerly, but of sawn timber. The dwellings are mostly small in size, often consisting only of two rooms, usually with no furniture, and one sits or rests on the ground, which is either floored with boards or only spread with rushes. The places appropriated for sleeping accommodation have usually a bar or rail between each two sleepers.

The natives conform now very much to European habits. Few, if any, of their primitive weapons are to be met with; some examples are figured in Cook's 'Voyages' (1773). The carving on them seems very graceful, spiral lines predominating in all the native carvings as well as tattooings. The façade or main entrance to some of their dwellings, called "wharres," was also formerly richly carved. They seem to have taken especial pride in the ornamentation of the bow

* Spelling doubtful.

and stern of their chiefs' canoes, and even the paddles were sometimes richly adorned.

Tattooing seems to have been almost universal ; even the Maori women, before they began to imbibe European prejudices, tattooed their lips, usually of a blackish-blue colour, lest they should bear the reproach of being red. 'Tattooed Maoris' heads were formerly offered for sale in the streets of Sydney and entered as "imports" upon the Customs books of that port. In the ethnographical department of the British Museum are shown some well-preserved specimens. This disgusting traffic at length reached such an extent that agents were sent over to select the best samples. There is one episode, however, in this horrible trade, not entirely destitute of humour. Some Europeans went over from Sydney to secure some heads ; upon landing they were immediately seized, tattooed, and killed, their heads being sold as the genuine article. At length, in 1831, the enormity of this traffic was made palpable to the Government through the disgusting escapade of a barbarous and drunken sea-captain. A proclamation was then issued, which had the effect of suppressing this scandalous trading in what was little less than human lives.

The bravery of the Maoris is well known, and I believe has never been disputed. Some few hundreds of them have held at bay several thousands of our best troops. Their "pahs," or stockaded intrenchments, were fenced round with upright poles about 11 feet

high, bound together with the tough plant called "supple jack." They were chiefly provisioned by women. "Hippahs," or strongholds of the natives of New Zealand, were usually situated on the top of steep hills, almost isolated, difficult of approach, often accessible only by a long narrow path, where hardly two persons could walk abreast. The hill-tops were often surrounded by palisades, within the enclosure of which stood the huts of the natives. Being destitute of water, no doubt these strong places were only the occasional resorts of the natives in times of danger. Some of the hill-tops on which they were situated are literally covered to a depth of several feet with the shells of shell-fish, mussels and other sorts, which they must have used as food.

At the Orakau Pah 300 well-armed Maoris fought 1500 British troops. The troops expended no less than 40,000 rounds of Enfield ammunition, but still the Maoris held out, and returned the fire with vigour till night closed the scene. Next day General Cameron and staff arrived, who, admiring, the enemies' bravery, held a parley with them through the Government interpreters, proposing that they should surrender; if they continued fighting they must all be killed, but if they surrendered they would be treated well. A chief answered, "E woa, ma te kuku tenei a te Maori: ka whawkai tonu ake! ake! ake!"—signifying, "Friends, this is the word of the Maori: they will fight on for ever! for ever! for ever!" The

defenders' ammunition being exhausted, they had to evacuate the pah. This they succeeded in doing, notwithstanding the vigilance of their enemies, who despatched in pursuit a detachment of mounted artillery, which cut off the retreat of a great number of Maoris, who were shot down as they were endeavouring to cross a swamp. Altogether upwards of 150 were killed, 33 being taken prisoners, 26 of whom were wounded, the remainder escaping with their chief Rewi.

The difficulties in New Zealand chiefly arose from the theory that by the Treaty of Waitangi, in 1840, the Maori nation agreed to hold their land under the Queen's gift, which constituted their new and sole title to it. The Maoris fought for their soil—their land—their “mother,” as they call it. “Land is a living thing,” say the Maori thinkers, “and man is mortal.” The following is a translation of a manifesto of “King Matutaera Potatau,” after the assembly of a large gathering of King natives at Otakei for the purpose of forming a code of laws useful for the future guidance and government of the natives:—

“This is a Manifesto establishing Laws. Ordained by the law-makers of King Matutaera Potatau, with the full consent of their Council (*Runanga*, Parliament) to those laws. Firmly done this 25th day of June, 1862.

“Law I. God is the head for all people of the world.

“Law II. God is the Great Power (*Mana*) above all powers (*nga mana*) of the world.

“Law III. Let man be fearing God, and obey His laws.

“ Law IV. Let the love of man be great to God ; let [him] also be steadfast in religion (*whakapona*) ; also let [him] love man (*te tangata*). ”

“ 1. God is the head of the King.

“ 2. The King is the head of men.

“ 3. Let man fear the laws of the King.

“ These are his laws :—

“ 1. If one man kills another man, by the laws of the King he shall be slain.

“ 2. If a man steals, by the law of the King he shall be scourged (*whana*).

“ 3. If a man sells a piece of land, by the law of the King he shall verily be scourged. This is the [kind of] scourge intended for him, even indeed as that of Waitara.

“ 4. The judgment (*whakawa*) of the Queen shall not fall upon the men of the King.

“ 5. If a Queen’s summons should be received by a King’s subject it shall be destroyed with fire.

“ 6. The King’s subject shall not obey (or go at) the summons of the Queen.

“ 7. Debts due to whites (*paheka*) should be properly paid.

“ 8. If a King’s subject should steal any goods belonging to a white it shall be for the King to judge him.

“ 9. Concerning leases [of land], such are not good. Should sheep come [to any place], they shall be killed without judgment (or inquiry).

“ O friends ! here are laws for all of you, dwelling in every place of Aotearoa.

“ If thou despisest these laws thou shalt shortly be killed (*mate*). This is a direction unto thee ; do thou be understanding. Do not thou sit still and say thou wert not taught.

“ These are laws firmly fixed for evermore.

“ Done by all the Councils (*Runanga*) of Tainui.

“ Pukekaraka, District (of) Otakei.”

CHAPTER II.

TOWNSHIPS.—STORES.—STREETS.—HOUSES.—“TINDER-BOXES.”—TOWNSHIPS MOSTLY COASTAL OR RIVERSIDE.—BULLOCK-PUNCHING.—FOREST, BUSH, AND BUSHRANGERS.—GETTING “BUSHED.”

TOWNSHIPS are the smaller colonial towns, and vary in size from the dimension of a moderate English village to about a fifth-rate English country town. Considerable trade is done in some of them, having hotels, banks, and telegraph offices. Nearly every house in them is a “store,” or shop, as we would say in England. Neither the streets nor the stores seem at any time overcrowded ; on gala or festive days they look gayer than usual, and there are more smartly dressed people about, the male gender usually predominating. The country settlers go occasionally to the townships with a packhorse or two in order to sell their products or purchase a few necessary commodities. The generality of the townships look smart and showy at a distance, and the first impression of them is usually satisfactory, they look so bright and clean. The thoroughfares are of ample width. As a rule the houses are not crowded together ; although occasionally two, three, or more adjoin, most of them

are singly detached. Neither are they built any great height; it is rare to see one above two stories high. Probably not two in a hundred of the houses could be said to be similar in design, size, or structure. Surviving specimens of the old style show that they were built mostly of wood throughout, even hotels and banks as well as stores. The colonists are gradually and surely doing away with these inflammable "tinder-boxes," and replacing them with structures of brick and stone. As regards brick-making, there are vast quantities of clay of good quality throughout the country, both in Australia and New Zealand, suited for this purpose. One powerful reason for the erection of brick or stone in place of wooden houses is the reduced premium for insurance. Formerly wooden houses were considered preferable, being quickly erected, and their comparative safeness in case of earthquake was an important advantage. With few exceptions each house has a garden, bit of turf, or yard at the back.

New Zealand being of no considerable breadth, the townships are situate mostly along the coasts or on the sides of rivers. They have some advantage here over those in Australia, where of necessity many of the townships are situated far inland, a great distance from sea or river, commodities of supply and demand being forwarded on drays drawn by bullocks.

This "bullock-punching," as it is called, is often very remunerative, 10 to 12 shillings and even £1 a

day being earned. In some places "bullockers" are in great request for hauling timber. They sometimes sustain serious loss from the death or disablement of their bullocks. In some cases whole teams, which vary from 2 to 12 bullocks and more, are lost in marshy spots. I have heard of a team of 12 in Australia remaining for two days up to their necks in a swamp. Their driver had gone round the country and collected 40 bullocks. These he fixed on to the 12 in the swamp, and by their united efforts the 40 pulled the others through. I believe the bullocks that were pulled out were not afterwards of much use, as they had sustained rather severe strains. I once saw on the shingle* a bullocker who was working along with his team, I think of 12, hauling timber. The leaders had suddenly headed with the others out to sea. It looked very much as if they would all be drowned, and I think the bullocker thoroughly believed they would, as he rushed about in great excitement, exclaiming "Good God! Good God! they will all be drowned." Luckily the leaders, after circling round a bit, got their feet aground, and, guided by them, the whole team arrived safely on dry land.

Many bullockers put bells on their bullocks' necks after their day's work is done; this is the handier (in rough country) to be able to find them when they want them for their next day's work.

* The beach is sometimes so called.

Good, strong, well-trained bullocks are worth £20 or slightly more the pair.

To the first European inhabitants of New Zealand its dense forests appeared to an extraordinary degree impenetrable. To clear a way through a forest 34 miles wide, which separated two inhabited districts, two missionaries employed each a party of 50 men, and it cost them more than a fortnight's labour.

Bushrangers, or men who frequent the bush, finding a hollow tree, will sometimes set it alight, either for a signal as a small column of smoke ascends, or for mere mischief. At certain seasons of the year firing scrub and trees is attended with some risk ; at other times it can be done with almost complete impunity. Burnt forest lands look very weird, especially by moonlight, and the multitude of gaunt, upright, leafless trees at first sight strikes one as somewhat eerie.

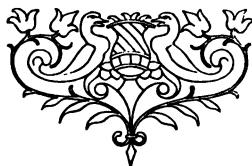
In a great part of the bush of New Zealand one has to follow tracks : these tracks are usually originally made by cattle working their way in one direction. To get off the track often involves the consequence of being "bushed." Off the track, so dense is the bush in some parts that one has to crawl along, especially where the "supple jack" is very plentiful, as this strong, flexible plant often forms quite a barrier of network.

To get "bushed" for comparatively short periods is a frequent occurrence in parts of New Zealand

where the bush is very dense. This has happened to myself twice. The first time I was five or six miles from home when night came on. I being on foot and the night being dark, it would have been next to impossible to find my way without getting further mixed, as I did not know the locality. I luckily happened to spy, before total darkness set in, a disused native hut, where I took up my quarters for the night. Next morning I got up on an eminence, when, on looking round, I had no doubt in which direction my way lay, and, with a little beating about the bush, soon found myself on a homeward track.

A second time I escaped being "bushed" for the night by the sagacity of the horse I happened to be riding. At dusk I had left some friends about three miles from my quarters; they were going in a direction different from mine. As darkness came on I lost my "bearings," and, endeavouring to find my way, got worse mixed. At last I gave up in despair, mounted my horse, slackened its rein, and lay well down on the saddle to escape blows that might be given me from anything hanging low down overhead. After a short time I was rewarded by my horse bringing me into the open, whence I knew my way home. So dark is it in the bush when there is no moon that, on a track I knew well by day, coming along at night I have been obliged to strike matches to keep me in the right way.

Swamps are numerous in many parts, and, being of various lengths and breadths, add another puzzle to the bush. They are in some instances so soft or else so thickly wooded, and have so dense an under-cover, as to be quite impassable. In a moderately dry open swamp with no trees growing in it I have seen the grass so thickly matted that it would bear a man lying on the top of it. The firing of the grasses of swamps to make them renew their tender herbage for animal food is frequently done.



CHAPTER III.

CATTLE-HUNTING.—CATTLE-STEALING.—WILD CATTLE.—WILD PIG.

CATTLE-HUNTING is usually confined to those animals that have broken loose from enclosed ground and live in the forest in a half wild state. It is more frequently practised in the North Island of New Zealand. A horse, a dog or two, a few rounds of ammunition and a slung rifle, with a sheath-knife in your belt, are the chief things you require when hunting them. It sometimes takes as much as three days' search before you find the beast you require. When pursued he often makes for distant openings of cleared ground, and if fagged may try to herd with tamer cattle. When you have him out on these openings your best plan is to ride within a few dozen yards of him and shoot him down. If he is not mortally wounded he is likely to charge, and you have to exercise great presence of mind and perfect control over your horse. Swerving quickly aside, you may probably, if sharp, put a bullet into him as he passes you. Sometimes, being very furious, he renews the charge till a straight shot settles him. But instances occur where, being hit, he takes to

flight, and you will probably have to ride hard to pass in front of him, and turn him to prevent him from getting back amongst the scrub or denser timber. I have seen a wild ox when pursued drive against a wire fence, and he has been propelled completely topsy-turvy over it, but, as quickly getting up, renewed his flight. On coming to a wire fence, if it does not line bush or scrub ground, jump off your horse and cut the wire with a wire-cutter, an instrument which, when cattle-hunting, it is serviceable to carry in your pocket. It may sometimes happen that you have not your wire-nipper with you, and riding to get through the nearest gate, which may be a long way off, may take too long. Employ this means :—place your belt or stirrup-leather over three or four of the top wires; by buckling it tightly one can usually force the wires down a foot or two; taking your coat off and placing it on the top wire, you lead your horse up and can usually make him jump over; then mount and follow as fast as you can in pursuit of the “enemy.” It is probable that in a little time you can ride him down to exhaustion, and you will be rather a muff if you do not then quickly kill him with a shot from your gun. Should he enter scrubby or wooded ground, tie your horse up, and, with your gun slung on your shoulders, and your sheath-knife in your belt, go on foot in pursuit, following as fast as you can. If he has been hit, the wounds may probably be beginning to tell on him, and you may at

any moment come on him standing at bay. Getting in front of him within close range, take aim at the centre of his forehead, holding the gun with a slight upward inclination, as I have known the bullet not to take effect through its inclination downwards. When you have killed the animal, some neighbouring men may be found who will cut it up, pack it, and forward it to you for a reasonable charge.

Cattle-stealing is occasionally practised. Persons will sometimes kill an unbranded ox, possibly even a stray branded one, in which case they either destroy the hide by burning it, or cut the brand out and then dispose of the carcass. What they cannot dispose of they preserve ; that is, they salt it down and put it in barrels.

Butchers most frequently kill their cattle and dress the carcasses in the cool of the evening, and then hang them up for the night to cool, cutting the meat up as early as possible in the morning.

Wild cattle are known at once by their extreme nervousness. They usually stampede—that is, take to flight—at the least sign of danger.

Wild-pig hunting, or, as it is more commonly called, pig-sticking, is practised in some localities with marked success. I have known a man kill as many as five wild hogs in a day. Owing to the pigs so frequently keeping to the thickets, one usually has to follow them on foot, through swamps and other obstacles, with dogs. It is not uncommon for the

pigs to kill the dogs, and few of the latter escape unhurt after a good day's hunt. The pigs will often-times "bale up," or stop, and with their back to a rock, tree, or other obstacle, keep two or more dogs at bay for a long time. Frequently, after having regained breath, they rush away again. The proximity to their haunts is usually marked with fresh grubblings or wallings in the least bits of water. They are usually killed with gun or knife. Natives, when the pigs are not very large, will sometimes kill them with a knife, holding them firmly at arm's-length by an ear. In place of a spear, a broken sheep-shearing blade fixed on a pole is used. Settlers whose produce is grown in the proximity of bush or scrubby ground have often to be very careful in making their ground pig-proof; that is, the fence surrounding their crops has to be closely covered at the bottom with wire-netting or "slabs" (split pieces of wood), or any substitute that may serve the same purpose, to guard against the wild pig's depredations. Some stations occasionally employ men to exterminate wild pigs whose devastating and offensive habits (about the "runs") have become a nuisance. I have heard of as many as 300 being killed in one year on a not very large Australian station. The greater part of these, I believe, were cured, packed, and sold in Melbourne as "best Berkshire pork."

CHAPTER IV.

TIMBER-CUTTING.—ACCIDENTS.—BOOMS.—TIMBER-DAMS.—SAW-PITS.—
 VESSELS EMPLOYED IN THE TIMBER TRADE.—TIMBER-RAFTING.—
 LOSS OF H.M.S. ORPHEUS.—“JAMS.”

THE felling and consumption of timber in the Colonies are on a vast scale. There are an enormous number of saw-mills, to which the timber is brought either by tramway, waterway, or by bullock-dray.

Where trees have not sufficient natural incline or lean, a notch or “scarf” is cut in them. They are then sawn from the back, and should always incline and fall in the direction of the “scarf.”

To saw down standing trees in New Zealand light stages or platforms are often built alongside them; then the lower undergrowth, which in some cases is very dense, has not to be cleared away, as one cuts the tree down several feet above it. These stages or platforms are doubly necessary with the kahikatea or white pine, an inferior timber tree usually growing in swamps, which sometimes sends out spurs or buttresses at the bottom. There being little or no undergrowth round trees in Australia, it is not necessary when they are cut down to rig up platforms. When trees are growing on steep inclines the plat-

forms are very necessary, so that when scarfing or sawing down the trees one may stand on a level surface. On calm days one can hear the fall of timber four or five miles away.

Accidents occasionally happen in the timber trade, generally from over-hurry or recklessness, as much of the work is done by contract. In one case a man was walking on the side of a hill where a number of logs (*i. e.* tree-trunks) were lying above him; one of these happened to slip and roll over him. He was much hurt, and had to be sent to a hospital, but it was a wonder he was not killed. I think he fell where the ground was slightly hollow, so that he did not get the full weight of the log on him. Log-rolling or jacking logs, so that either water, tram, or bullockers may take them to their destination, is a serious occupation, and requires much skill and smartness. One fatal accident occurred to a half-caste who was standing between two logs when one of them swung round, catching his head and killing him instantly. The greater number of accidents usually happen at the saw-mills amongst the machinery belting and circular saws.

Booms are generally formed of a number of floating logs secured together, surrounding loose logs, which are taken out of the water as required for the saw-mill.

The timber-dam is a construction somewhat similar to an English flood-gate, and is erected, in timber-

milling, to collect and retain sufficient water behind it for logs to float in. They are usually built at the egress of long, narrow valleys, or in any suitable situations where there is enough timber and where water will collect. These reservoirs are generally soon filled in the rainy season, but the gates to them have to be enormously strong. They are sometimes very expensive things to construct, especially if a broad span is required, and the subsoil is not very firm. The quantity of timber required for the purpose is generally pit-sawn on the spot, the ironwork of bolts and bars being usually sent ready-made. The cost of these dams ranges from the moderate amount of £60 to the very considerable sum of £2000, very exceptionally slightly dearer, but at the latter high price the quantity of timber to be disposed of must be almost unlimited and of excellent quality.

Little of the timber grown in Australia will float, as does that raised in the neighbouring island of New Zealand, the Australian timber being nearly all hard and heavy. Dams constructed in Australia are chiefly for the purpose of storing water for stock during dry seasons or for irrigation purposes.

In New Zealand, before steam saw-mills came into use, the natives and whites used to make primitive saw-pits at the bottom of the ridges or hills whereon there was enough of the required timber; then they dug at the bottom of the ridge a trench surmounted by an earthen bank, and as the trees were cut down

and sawn into lengths or “logs” (the local name), the logs, being started with a push, rolled down the incline, were slightly checked at the bottom by the bank before the trench, toppled over and rolled into it. Here the sawyers attached pulleys, and the tackle connected with a winch at the saw-pit end, being set to work, by degrees hauled the log on to the saw-pit. Sawn timber in former times realized a good price ; men who remember those days say that with hard work and long hours at it they made it pay right royally (10 or 12 shillings being the average daily pay of a competent sawyer). But I am afraid they were not much the better for it, as I think they used to “booze”—that is, drink it mostly away. It used to be the general practice to make Saturday the day for conveying the week’s supply of sawn timber to the water’s edge, and here it would be piled on the bank in readiness to be either shipped into coasting vessels or floated on rafts to places more convenient for the purpose.

The number of vessels engaged almost entirely in the timber trade has greatly increased since steam saw-mills came into more general operation. The kind of vessels chiefly employed in the trade are the cutter, schooner, ketch, and scow. The last two are usually of very shallow draught. When loaded the schooner might be computed to draw 10 feet, cutter 5 or 6, scow and ketch 3 to 4 feet. Without cargo the scow and ketch will average only a foot to 18

inches ; they have centre-boards, which, by a sort of rack, or by the windlass, can be raised or lowered as required in shallow or deep water. They are flat-bottomed, flat-decked, two-masted vessels, with a small removable deck-house for accommodation, a slight curve fore and aft, strong bulwarks all the way round, and a good length of gangway on each side, which greatly facilitates the putting balk, round or squared timber, on board. Their carrying capacities range from 30,000 to 100,000 feet of sawn timber in boards or logs, or cut into "fitches," all being equally well carried. As they have no hold, all cargo is carried on deck, and strong chains are attached at intervals, that pass across the cargo from side to side, to prevent the cargo from getting dangerously shifted, as it otherwise might do at sea if it were rough or the weather stormy.

Rafting, or bringing timber down in floats, requires great physical strength, a sharp eye, readiness of resource, and cool courage. Sometimes a few men, say three or four, "pole" down the stream to the mill just on 100 large logs in one raft. The ordinary way of making the raft is as follows :—Each log has a hook or "dog," as it is called, driven into it about the centre of its length, each "dog" holding a ring ; through each ring a rope or chain is passed, and by the rope or chain being drawn tight the logs are lashed together, square on. Thus an oblong raft is formed, and, according to the depth of the water, is either "poled" or towed along. In rivers on which

rafting is practised, dangerous places where one might run aground are often marked by shrubs or brooms fixed above the water on poles. In many cases, on the large creeks of New Zealand, if these precautions were not taken rafts would frequently get grounded, and in many cases remain aground till the high tide floated them. I was once on a steam-tug which ran aground in the estuary of a good-sized river. We appeared to be several hundred yards from the land on one side, which was very flat. The other side, being rather precipitous, looked much nearer. As we had only grounded slightly, the tide, which was then rising, soon floated us off, and we were able to steam slowly ahead. Much of the grounding at the entrance and in the great reaches of the rivers is due to cutting off "corners" instead of carefully following the bend of the channel. That there was a fair depth of water in the natural bed of the river in the estuary of which we grounded is shown by the fact that a man-of-war of considerable size shortly afterwards steamed several miles up without meeting a mishap, finding plenty of draught water in the proper channel.

The loss of H.M.S. 'Orpheus,' with her commander and 23 officers and 166 sailors, Royal Marines, and boys, 70 lives only being saved out of her complement, mustering 260, forms a mournful episode in New Zealand history. The vessel was wrecked on the Manukau bar, on the west coast

of New Zealand. This dangerous bar, with 30 feet at top of high water, extends a distance of three miles right across the entrance, inside of which are shifting sandbanks, on which the sea is continually breaking. Very shortly after passing the bar, at about 1.30 A.M., the ship struck on what was subsequently discovered to be the extreme edge of the middle bank and about 50 feet from deep water. Orders were immediately given to drive her astern, but the engines never moved, the ship broaching to with her head to the north, the rollers making a complete sweep over the port broadside, tearing up the hatchways, and she consequently soon filled with water. The serious situation of the vessel was at once seen ; it was almost buried in water, the seas breaking clear over all and halfway up the rigging. In a short time the masts went one by one ; the poor fellows in the rigging were heard cheering and encouraging each other as they fell. The night being clear, with bright moonlight, large masses of wreck were seen floating about, to which a number of poor fellows were clinging, who were picked up, most of them in the last stage of exhaustion. At daylight, the wind subsiding, the sea became perfectly calm. It was difficult to realize that such a calamity had happened ; that of that noble ship, and her complement of gallant fellows, so lately full of hope and life, nothing now remained but the few half-naked sailors who stood around.

Where timber is floated down the water-courses to the main stream after heavy rains, "jams" are liable to occur at the least obstruction. One log gets caught by a snag, another is quickly caught by it, and before they can get clear another fills up the aperture and an unyielding abutment is formed. Other logs still following increase the area of the barrier by each fresh arrival. The greatest difficulty ensues to clear the channel of this complicated mass, till some bold axeman, marking where the most critical point or origin of the "jam" is, endeavours by great effort to effect a clearance. The creaking of the logs usually shows when his well-directed energy has begun to tell; then, throwing his implement aside, it is time for him to get quickly on shore, for with a groan and a crash the mass of logs often suddenly gives way. Then, if the axeman is still wary, he bounds from floating log to floating log; he has to be almost as nimble as a cat, it being nearly certain death to fall into the water in quickly bounding from log to log. He soon gets near enough to spring ashore, meeting a warm welcome amidst the shouts and joy of his companions.

Freshes are caused after heavy rains by the accumulation of rainwater, and often swell rivers to a great height. The river-water on these occasions is usually much discoloured, and often remains so after flowing miles out to sea.

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A TIMBER-JAM.

CHAPTER V.

THE NEW ZEALAND FLAX-PLANT.

THE flax-plant of New Zealand, the leaves of which, being slightly convex, somewhat resemble enormous antique double-edged sword-blades, varying from 4 to 10 feet in length and from 1 to 4 inches in breadth at the widest part, thrives in various soils, especially in marshy situations, where one can often see the ground covered with it for acres. A reed-like stem, about one inch in thickness, grows from its centre to several feet above the height of the leaves; on the top of this stem is the flower. I have often seen the Maori children bend down the heads of the reeds to suck the blossoms, from which is extracted a small dew-like drop, of sweet flavour. The flowers in seed resemble oblong pods. There might be a long and perhaps prosperous future for the New Zealand native wild flax if any adequate means were discovered of separating the glutinous substance from the fibres, so as to fit it for extensive exportation. The hitherto known process may be thus described:—The flax is placed in boilers filled

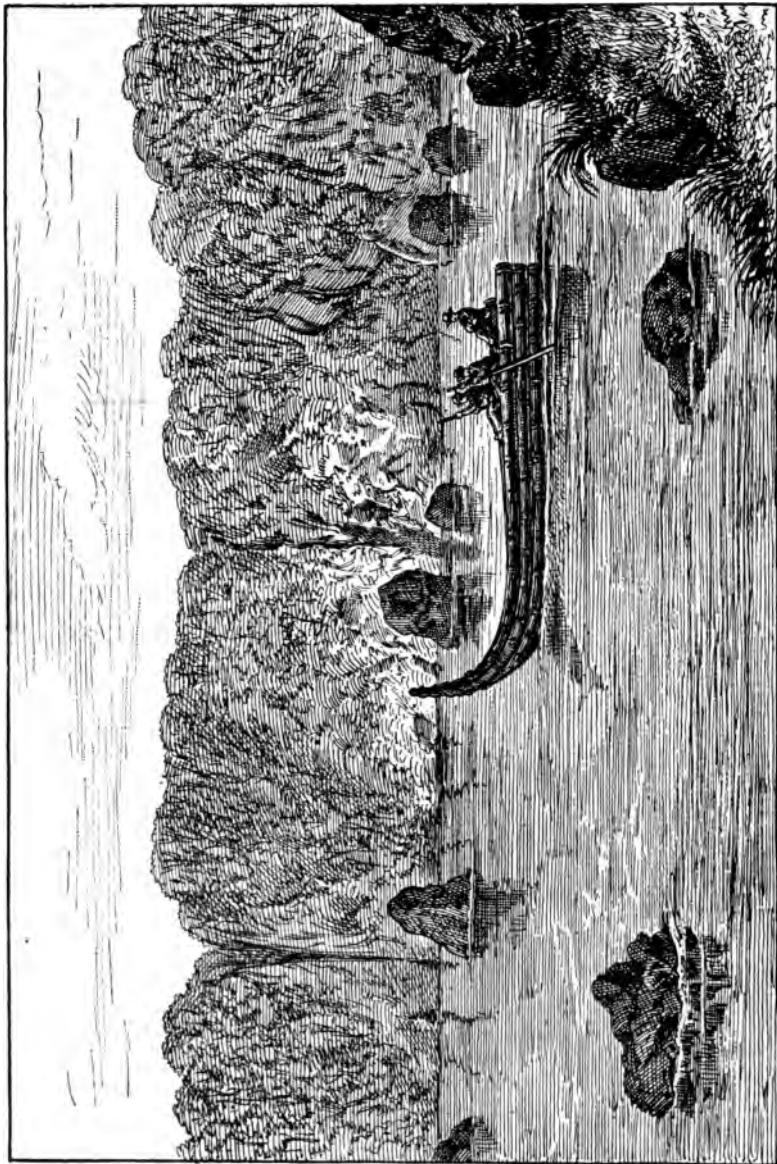
with water in which a small portion of alum is dissolved—say a couple of ounces to three or four gallons of water. The flax is boiled from one to two hours ; it is then placed in cold water, and the leaf is washed by the hand, as in washing linen. The whole of the green part is immediately separated and the fibres are left almost perfectly free from every other matter. In its present mode of manufacture machinery plays an important part. The green leaves are placed between revolving rollers with projecting beaters, a plate is so fixed that the epidermis is crushed against it while the fibre remains intact. The fibre thus freed from the leaf is washed by various methods, and hung up or laid on the ground to dry and bleach ; an arm or barrel scutch is then employed, and when the fibre is baled it is ready for use. It realizes about £17 per ton.

The tensile strength of this fibre compared with others, according to Professor Lindley, is as follows:—

Silk will bear a strain of	34 lbs.
<i>Phormium tenax</i> ,	23 lbs.
European hemp ,	16 lbs.
European flax ,	11 lbs.

Of course, if it were worth the New Zealander's while and the wild stock became scarce, the inducement to cultivate the plant would be greater ; and doubtless it might be greatly improved by cultivation. The manufacture of paper from it, also from many of

[*To face* p. 108.



FLOATING DOWN THE RIVER TEREMAKAU.



the New Zealand grasses, might be eminently successful.

I have given an illustration * in order to show the way in which the stems of this plant have been employed, to which I may here append the following explanation :—"On the west coast of New Zealand (South Island) the river Teremakau enters a gorge where the banks are nearly perpendicular, from 30 to 80 feet high. This is where an exploring party found it necessary to construct a mohiki, or raft, on which to float down the river. We had first to collect a quantity of the flax flower-stalks, which are about 13 feet long, 1 inch in diameter, and porous, like cork. We cut sufficient of these to make about twenty-five bundles, each bundle 1 foot in diameter, 13 feet long, and tapering towards one end like a cigar. Our next step was to place a number of these bundles side by side, tying them strongly with the leaves of the flax-plant. Thus we had a sort of raft, 13 feet long, 7 feet wide at the stern, something in shape like a ship's dingy. We made two more of these rafts, and placing them on the first one we lashed all three strongly together, and, when finished, the structure stood 3 feet high. With this hastily-built contrivance we descended the gorge, carried along by the swift and rapid current to the

* This illustration and part of the description appeared originally in the 'Illustrated London News.'

sea—a distance of twelve miles. At one time we were caught in an eddy, and kept ten minutes spinning round and round.” *

* Imagine a raft of sear bulrushes bound together as above, and you have a fair instance of that employed in navigating the Tere-makau, on the west coast of New Zealand, by the exploring party.



CHAPTER VI.

NEW ZEALAND TREES.—THE TEA-TREE.—POHUTUKAWA.—PURIRI.—
NIKAU.—THE CRACKER-TREE.—KAURI.

THE tea or *ti* tree of New Zealand (*Dracæna terminalis* or *Cordyline Ti*, order Liliaceæ) is a shrub or small tree, called “tea-tree” from its leaves having been used by Captain Cook to make tea. The plant is thus described by him:—“It is a small tree or shrub, with five white petals or flower-leaves shaped like those of a rose, having smaller ones of the same figure on the intermediate spaces, and twenty or more filaments or threads. The tree sometimes grows to a medium height, and is generally bare at the lower part, with a number of small branches growing close together towards the top. The leaves are small and pointed like those of the myrtle; it bears a dry, roundish seed-case, and grows commonly in dry places near the shore. The leaves were used by many of us as tea, which has a very agreeable bitter flavour when they are recent, but loses some of it when they are dried. When the infusion was made strong it acted on some as an emetic.”

Some parts of New Zealand at certain seasons of the year appear almost white with the blossom of the tea-tree. At first sight, when young and not in blossom, at a distance one might mistake it for grass. I myself was struck with its appearance in this way, and thought what splendid hay the country must grow.

Large quantities of the younger growth of this obstructive plant can be, and are at times, easily burnt off the land; but, owing to the plant seeding when it is very young, though it be often burnt off, quantities of former seeds sodden in the ground by rain or otherwise cause each season a fresh growth. The small seeds resemble caraway seeds, and the seed-case, about the size of a full-grown pea, is crammed with them.

In New Zealand firewood is chiefly cut from the tea-tree wood, and is frequently hauled from the bush by bullocks to a point nearest its destination. The cost of hauling is from about 1s. 6d. to 2s. a ton, according to the distance, and the charge for freight is about 1s. 6d. per ton. In spite of these charges a good quantity of firewood finds its way to the towns for various purposes, a large quantity of it being required at the freezing works to convert into charcoal. Throughout the Colonies there are hundreds of tons of firewood cut monthly to sell, besides what is cut down and used for household purposes or burnt off in land-clearing. Along river-banks may sometimes

be noticed wood-stacks of various length and height, composed of billets of wood from 2 feet 6 inches to 2 feet 9 inches long. The blocks have to be laid perfectly straight one on another, so that the tonnage and cost for carriage can be easily estimated. A great quantity of wood, chiefly that of the gum-tree, is burnt on the steamers that ply on Australian rivers. Numbers of men who regularly cut fire-wood purchase a licence and cut the wood in handy places to sell on the spot. Good axemen earn fair wages at this "job," cutting just on three to four tons a day, making 10 or 12 shillings per day, according to the quality and size of the wood, the larger growth, which has to be split into blocks, being more valuable than unhewn wood; but wood-chopping is rather tiring work.

The pohutukawa is a New Zealand hardwood evergreen tree, bearing an exceedingly pretty crimson blossom about Christmas. It is usually of a good size, but is very crooked-limbed. New Zealand boat-builders use it for making the knees and elbows of boats.

The nikau is a wild palm of New Zealand. The "heart" of this palm is edible; it is about the thickness of a man's wrist and about a foot long, and tastes something like the English hazel-nut, when roasted on the ashes of a fire. It is the most southern of all palms, and is a very awkward-looking plant, all the branches pointing straight upwards, with huge

stiff leaf-stalks and sheaths ; but the fruit is of the brightest scarlet, and its huge bunches, as well as the pearly white flowers, make the plant conspicuous amongst other green trees.

The cracker-tree, the wood of which is not serviceable for any lasting purpose, is abundantly supplied with leaves, which are about one fourth the size of those of the india-rubber tree, but darker in colour. These leaves are very useful in feeding animals. Bullockers and others will sometimes cut down a number of the trees to prevent their animals straying too far in search of pasture. After the trees are cut down, in a short space of time the wood yields a profit from the indigenous fungus that grows thereon. This fungus begins to grow on the tree directly slight decomposition has set in, say after the first year, and may grow continually five or six years afterwards. Its great aid in growing is rain or dampness ; so if one periodically, say once every month, plucks the fungus without pulling out the roots, provided it has moisture, another crop quickly springs forth. The great drawback in fungus-gathering is its size and weight. When gathered in its moist or partially moist state it has to be spread out and thoroughly dried, which may be best done in sheds, each lot taking often over a week to dry. If there be the least bit damp when it is in its crisp state and packed in sacks, it is liable to rot the whole. In rough comparison, the weight of this commercial article,

when wet or dry, may be considered equal to that of a similar sackful of leaves. It brings from $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ a pound, and its export to China only is considerable; there jellies and soups are said to be made of it. Some cheating is practised in the trade by putting small pieces of lead amongst the fungus to make it weigh heavier. I think that in places where a good number of the cracker-trees, which seldom exceed 15 inches in diameter, have been cut down, one or two men only employed might earn 5 shillings a day, or, with a horse each, near double. The carrying and the distances one has to go take a considerable time.

From the puriri, a hardwood tree of New Zealand, much valued for making railway "sleepers," a beautiful yellow dye has been extracted by the Rev. A. G. Purchas, one of the ablest chemists in the colony. He found it a fast colour and easily worked.

The New Zealand kauri tree, a species of pine, is probably the most valuable of its class, as in no other part of the colony does it exist except that lying northward of 39° south latitude. Trees in England generally branch out from the sides; the New Zealand kauri nearly always branch out from the head of the tree. Of this wood there appear to be three kinds: the ordinary; the figured, which is a more variegated species; and the mottled, by far the most sought after. Its grain is intersected with little pimples, blotches, or freckles, which seem composed of twisted knots in the grain of the wood. Good

mottled kauri timber is very scarce, and is used chiefly for cabinet work. It has been stated that these valuable trees grow more alone and look more gnarled about the stump and barrel than other species of these pines, but by outside appearances they are certainly not always to be distinguished from others of their class. For sawing purposes trees of 4, 5, or 6 feet in diameter are preferred to those of greater bulk. The reason of this is that for larger trees special saws would have to be used both to cut them down and to saw them up at the mill, or that before being taken into the mill it would be necessary to blast them, or split them in halves, which is effected by gunpowder with a fuse being placed in a hole bored in them ; this usually damages the timber.



CHAPTER VII.

KAURI GUM AND GUM-DIGGING.—CLASSES AND CONDITIONS.—SCENERY OF NEW ZEALAND.

THE kauri tree, which forms the chief timber industry of New Zealand, yields a peculiar, resinous, solidified sap, extensively used in the manufacture of varnish. This sap or gum is dug out of the ground at various depths, from just beneath the surface to many feet below it. Places where it is found in most abundance were in former times covered with kauri pine trees, but are now generally devoid of forest growth, and are known by the name of gum-fields. Where there are standing kauri trees the digging for gum is proportionately increased owing to the immense number of large surface-roots which this tree, like nearly all other New Zealand trees, sends out. It is not unfrequent for settlers, when ploughing, digging, or cutting drains, to find it sometimes in detached lumps, at other times in large deposits. The usual way of getting it is by the use of a spear and spade, the spear being a steel rod about four feet long, half an inch in diameter, and sharply pointed, the handle being similar to that of a

spade. With this instrument the gum-digger pierces the ground in order to get at the lumps or deposits of gum. The gritty "touch" informs him at once when he strikes gum; he digs round it until he has extracted it, and then resumes his prodding. Instances are recorded of "finds" of from £10 to £50 worth of good-class gum obtained within a few dozen square yards, but such cases are now becoming rather rare.

Kauri gum is of various colours, from pure white to variously clouded, reddish, or transparent vitreous. Those who first see it are usually struck by its resemblance to amber. Blocks and nuggets of it are of various sizes, from those so big as to require breaking up to those of an ounce in weight, its hardness and weight varying according to its quality.

Bush gum is that which has oozed from the tree and hardened on the ground; it is the cheapest kind. It is melted down, and sometimes a sort of lamp oil has been made of it.

Gum-diggers on rainy days usually scrape their gum, that is, clean it from the earth with which it may be covered, and scrape the surface of it, which is always found in a state of partial decay. When thus cleaned the clear solid gum is reached, and being packed in sacks is ready for sale.

Best gum will realize about £55 a ton. The freight to London is about £3, but by far the greater quantity goes to America. Exported gum is carefully

packed in wooden boxes to prevent the lumps from breaking.

Gum-diggers usually camp upon unsold Crown or native land where they can pursue their occupation without restraint. Their huts are frequently built of raupo (a long native grass). The real gum-digger seldom takes care of his earnings. His habit is to spend them at the nearest "pub" in what he calls a "jolly good spree." The gum-digger's pay depends much upon chance or luck, or the amount of skill or diligence he exercises in his occupation. Hardly any, on a yearly average, exceed 4*s.* a day. At gum-digging as a casual occupation one finds working, besides Europeans, native women, boys, and girls. Persons who can afford to plough for it earn about three times as much as those working with the ordinary spear and spade.

In this country, as well as Australia, are seen all sorts and conditions of men, such as noblemen, physicians, doctors, B.A.'s, shipbuilders, &c. knocking about in all sorts of employment, such as herdsmen, bullock-drivers, shepherds, ostlers, cooks, waiters, &c.

With regard to animals, it is a most remarkable fact that so large an island as New Zealand, extending over more than 1000 miles in length, and in many parts 90 broad, with varied stations, a fine climate, and land of all heights, from 14,000 feet downwards, with the exception of a small rat, does not possess one indigenous animal.

The scenery of New Zealand is superb, being both grand and beautiful, with numerous wooded ranges of moderate elevation. The two snow-capped mountains found in the North Island are Tongariro and the Apollo of mountains, Mount Egmont, 7000 and 8000 feet high. Mount Egmont, or Taranaki, its native name, is certainly not New Zealand's highest, but is nevertheless its most remarkable mountain. It rises in a perfect cone, with a base thirty miles in diameter. It was formerly a volcano, the extinct crater of which is flattened and covered with snow for nearly a quarter of its entire elevation. From a vessel's deck in clear weather it has been seen for a distance of over 100 miles. In the South Island of New Zealand there is a continuous series of rugged forest-clad ranges, displaying mountain peaks 10,000 feet high, white with perpetual snow. This range extends from Cape Farewell to Dusky Bay; it is called by the settlers "the backbone of the island," and forms an almost impassable barrier between the east and west coast of the South Island of New Zealand. The mountains in these islands seemingly form mostly coast ridges, with a tableland stretching to the interior. This geographical character apparently is more marked in the South than in the North Island. Rivers, for the most part on the west coast of New Zealand, especially in the South Island, are distributed very freely at intervals from 10 to 15 miles along the coast. Being snow-fed, they rush

with impulsive force after the melting of the snow on the inland ranges, forming narrow channels in the natural beach. The continual change of both depth and flow proves very dangerous to the small craft frequenting these rivers. The rate of the current in the summer months, by reason of the melting of the snow, is 8 to 10 miles an hour; this scours the channel and causes the stream to run out to sea direct. But in winter the flow is not, as a rule, sufficiently strong to keep the entrance clear, and, owing to the action of the sea, the sandspits to the north or south extend so widely as to make the bars at times impassable.





Appendix.

ANTIPODEAN HUMOUR AND PATHOS.

SEVERAL of the incidents contained in this appendix appeared originally in the "Proceedings" of the Royal Colonial Institute. They are here re-told for the benefit of persons who have not already seen them in the volumes of that series.

When the Right Hon. Sir George F. Bowen, G.C.M.G., the first Governor of Queensland—which originally was the northern province of New South Wales, and was separated by the Queen in virtue of an Act of the Imperial Parliament—arrived there, he found a population of only 25,000 whites. In the Treasury he found just 7½d., and, what is very curious, the night after his arrival, a thief, supposing the new Governor had brought some kind of outfit for use in the new Colony, broke into the chest and stole the 7½d. That 7½d. had in 1888–9 grown into an annual revenue of £4,000,000, and the 25,000 people whom Sir G. Bowen found in the Colony on

his arrival had increased to a population of nearly 350,000.

Some years before 1890–1 an Australian aboriginal was brought to England by a squatter from Queensland. He took him into the city on a very busy day, when there were a large number of people passing to and from the Exchange and banks, and while waiting to cross the street he said: “Jacky, what do you think of this place ?” The black replied, with an exclamation of surprise: “Why, master, it’s like an ant-bed.” Now, anyone who has seen the busy ants in Australia going in myriads to and from their work will realize what an apt simile this was.*

The following incidents are related by Sir F. Napier Broome in describing his visit to Shark’s Bay, Western Australia:—“No Governor had ever been to Shark’s Bay before. The population are chiefly employed in the pearl fishery. Nevertheless, Chinese are employed to work the boats and dredges. As our little steamer came into the bay we were met by the pearl cutters, to one of which I was transferred. The boat could not quite reach the shore, and I was just mounting the shoulders of the Chinaman who had been detailed to carry me, when a brawny pearler declared that the Governor of the Colony should be

* This anecdote was related Sir Saul Samuel, K.C.M.G., &c., in the course of some remarks after the reading of the paper on ‘The Aborigines of Australia,’ by Edward Greville, Esq., Proc. R. Col. Inst. vol. xxii.

carried by an Englishman, and, all in his Sunday clothes, jumped into the water and bore me off triumphantly.

“Not here, but on the diving-grounds further north, a remarkable oyster was fished up during the season 1884–5. It contained a perfect pearl cross, consisting of nine well-shaped pearls, about as large as peas, adhering together in that exact form. Its possessor will wear the only natural pearl cross ever found, or perhaps likely to be found, and a high value is set upon it as a unique curiosity. The gentleman in whose hands it was when I saw it told me it was hoped that the Pope would buy this miraculous cross.”

“Sometimes there is a breakdown upon the telegraph line. One day in the year 1884–5 a telegram could not be sent to Lord Derby. I learned the reason. A poor fellow had lost himself in the desert, had come upon the telegraph line in the course of his wanderings, and, as a last resource in the extreme of exhaustion, had lit a fire at the foot of a post, and so burnt it through and broken the wire. He knew that this must bring succour, as the repairing party would at once start from the nearest station, fifty or sixty miles off. They set out, but were too late, and found the unfortunate traveller dead beside his horse. He was only twenty miles from water.” *

* Paper on Western Australia, in Proc. R. Col. Inst., by Sir Frederick Napier Broome, K.C.M.G.

A very intelligent missionary who came to Queensland resolved to teach the natives a higher Christianity. He said, "We will have no more gifts—no more blankets, rum, and tobacco." King Billy, with a brass plate announcing his dignity, approached the missionary and inquired, "No more blankets?" The missionary replied, "No." "No more baccy?" "No." "No more rum?" "No." "Then," said King Billy, drawing himself up to his full height, and looking scornfully at the missionary, "all right, good day; no more Alleluias." *

Bill Bowman was a noted circuit preacher and "muscular Christian" in Australia. At one of his meetings a local bully created a disturbance, and on being publicly rebuked by Bowman, sent him a challenge to fight. Bowman, having the choice of weapons, selected a half-bushel of potatoes, as big as his fist, for each man, and stipulated that his opponent must stand fifteen paces distant, and that only one potato at a time should be taken from the measure. The "rough" protested indignantly, but Bowman insisted on his right to choose his own weapons, and threatened to denounce the desperado as a coward if he failed to come up to time. The fight took place on the outskirts of the town. Everybody in the place was present to see the fun.

* Mr. J. Henniker-Heaton, M.P., in the discussion on 'The Aborigines of Australia,' by Edward Greville, Esq., Proc. R. Col. Inst. vol. xxii.

Bill Bowman threw the first potato. It struck his opponent on the chest, and split into countless pieces. A yell of delight went up from the crowd, which nettled the desperado, and his potato flew wide of the mark. Bowman watched his chance, and every time his opponent stooped for a potato another one hit him on the side, making a wet mark on his clothes, and then smashing into fragments. He hit the desperado about five times, and then the sixth potato struck him on the ribs, knocking the wind completely out of him and doubling him up on the grass. The spectators were almost crazy with laughter, but Bill Bowman looked as solemn as if he had just finished preaching a funeral sermon. The desperado was taken home and put to bed, and there he stayed for more than a week before he recovered from the effects of his potato duel.

The following lines were written on a card by a West Australian and placed on a big cabbage:—

“ Drumhead ” is my name,
Twenty-nine pounds I weigh ;
If you don’t believe me,
Come and raise me up.

The lower agents of the law in Australia were at one time generally Irishmen, and their agile fancy sometimes led them to blunder curiously. Here are two instances. Many Chinese names sound like a burlesque, and are probably barbarous renderings of

the original Mongolian : Fong Fat, Ah Su, Ah Foo, and the like, are common. A newly-appointed crier in a county court was ordered by the judge, in a case in which a Chinaman was a witness, to call for Ah Song. He looked puzzled for a moment, and cast a sly glance at the judge, but finding him grave as an undertaker, he turned to the audience and blandly simpered, "Gintlemen, would any of you favour his honour with a song?" In another court a new policeman was ordered by the judge to go in search of the official interpreter, whose name was Ah Kat. "Constable, go for Ah Kat." "Yes, your honour; is it a tom-cat your honour wishes for?"

After all, wool and gold are the two great products that most Australians chiefly value. The problem of how far wool can be grown in the Tropics is an interesting one, and has not yet been entirely solved, because what wool loses in weight in many parts of North Queensland it gains in fineness and delicacy. I recollect, when in England seven years ago, a discussion arose on this point at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society. One of the speakers averred that wool could not be grown in the Tropics, and he was interrupted by Mr. Landsborough, the explorer, who shouted out, "Sir, you are theorizing; negroes live in the Tropics, and they grow wool on their heads." (Laughter.) This reminds me of a story of a negro church in New York, where a negro clergyman addressed the negro congregation to this

effect: "My brethren, de Scriptures do tell us at de last day de Lord will divide de sheep from de goats. Now," he added (thrusting his fingers through his own woolly locks), "bless de Lord, we knows who wears de wool." (Roars of laughter.)

Not long ago, in a popular comic periodical, a characteristic little woodcut represented a Devonshire tourist, in the regulation "rig," apparently from London, seated at his boarding-house tea-table, attended by the typical hostess in person. Keenly relishing the country bread and butter, he exclaims: "Delicious! So this is the famous Devonshire buttah?" The truthful native landlady, however, ingenuously replies: "Noa, young man, it ain't; it's Horsetralian."

A well-known Australian, being once asked what was the good of his making money as he was doing, when his son would only spend it, replied: "If he has as much pleasure in spending it as I have in making it, it will be all right."

Personal preferences and antipathies sometimes take curious turns in the Colonies. A somewhat extreme instance is that of an Irishman, an employer of labour, who required the workmen he employed to be all of his own nationality.

Another colonial story I have heard relates to a place where the town council and numbers of the

townsfolk were Scotsmen. Having some work to be done by contract, they invited tenders for its execution, but they had some objections to all the applicants. At length a Chinaman put in his tender, subjoining thereto a Scots name: "Tender by MacPhearson." The council wishing to see MacPhearson, the Chinaman appeared, and being asked by the council what he had called for, answered: "Me MacPhearson, your honour."

A Maori beholding the telegraph for the first time shook his head, remarking "A very bad fence!"

Heke, a Maori chief who led the war of 1845, once said: "What care I for either men or spirits? I fear not; let the Fellow in Heaven look to it. Have I not prayed to him for years? It is for him to look to me this day."

When Tawhiao, the late Maori king, visited London a few years ago in company with Major Te Wheoro and other chiefs, many amusing yarns concerning the old man's doings in the metropolis were recorded. How he was enamoured of the Gaiety ballet-girls (just like the Pakeha *jeunesse dorée*), and how he was accustomed to perform a wild war-dance on his best bell-topper after coming home from the theatre at night, are matters of history.





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